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To Mariana

With love and a Merry Christmas

from Mauda and David.

December 25<sup>th</sup> 1916







**BERNINI AND OTHER STUDIES**



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PLATE I.



131

# BERNINI AND OTHER STUDIES

IN THE

## HISTORY OF ART

BY

RICHARD NORTON

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

New York

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1914

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## PREFACE

THE essays presented in the following pages are the product of no hasty thought. I am grateful to the kind friends who have encouraged their publication, and to the publishers for giving them so attractive a form.

The choice of illustrations has been difficult. It has seemed best, however, to reproduce in full the little-known sketches of Bernini showing the development, in his mind, of the design for the Piazza of St. Peter's, and the sculptor's models wrought by his own hands. For the rest I have thought that it would be more serviceable for the reader to have a few typical examples illustrating the main points of the text rather than a larger, and perhaps more confusing, selection of subjects from the almost inexhaustible wealth of available material. I am under deep obligation for the generous permission to include among the illustrations material in the Brandegee Collection (at Faulkner Farm, Brookline, Massachusetts) hitherto unpublished. The heliotype plates were prepared and printed under the direction of Mr. William C. Ramsay, of Boston.

RICHARD NORTON.

LONDON, July, 1914.





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**BERNINI**



## I. AN ESTIMATE OF BERNINI

DURING the last hundred years there has come a great change in the feeling of most people towards the art of the different epochs of the Renaissance. Whereas our grandfathers and our great-grandfathers held Carracci and Guido and others of the same time in high esteem, we are now taught that these later men are of little value or interest in comparison with the artists of the fifteenth century, and even the most halting and stuttering "Primitive" is held of more worth than the more able masters of the seventeenth century. This change is natural enough, but betokens a lack of true understanding of the purpose and powers of the fine arts.

The altered mental attitude in religious matters which renders most people incapable of feeling the appeal of the mystical fervour of the seventeenth century explains in a measure why the earlier work is preferred; and added to this is the effect of the development of archæological training which has given rise to an interest in the mere search for origins—a search that has done infinite harm in blinding the eyes of students to the fact that, for the world at large, it is far more important to see whither life is carrying us than from what slow, groping, and inexplicable protoplasm and haphazard chance it sprung. The teachers of our universities go on in their dull round, like Dervishes, repeating that the Par-

thenon was the most perfect expression of Greek art, and there are those who cannot see the beauty of the silver vases from Boscoreale because they choose to call them Roman. Without doubt there are many sound reasons for the purely archæological study of classic art, and recently a small but perceptive band of scholars has raised Roman art from the ignorant neglect into which it had fallen and given it the proper position due to any such able expression of great ideas; this justifies the hope that the worth of the later Italian schools will become once more manifest, not again to be forgotten.

The idea that the art of any civilized people rises by a steady and constantly more perfect progression to one glorious peak of perfection and then falls by rapid and recurring blunders to a waste of meaningless effort is, I believe, due to the too frequent mistake of considering the monuments of the arts as separate entities and as self-ordained rather than as indices of vital currents of thought and life. The English dictionary is not synonymous with English literature. Nor does the will-o'-the-wisp phrase "art for art's sake" mean that each work of art is a unique and inexplicable phenomenon. Its true meaning is that the artist, be he poet or sculptor or musician — no matter what form his art takes — finds the only adequate expression of himself in the forms and under the governance of the laws of the art which he follows. By so far as he follows these laws is his work intelligible to other men; by so far as he finds new combinations for the forms and new adaptations of the laws to meet the new circumstances of ever changing life is he original and great. When Shakespeare or Keats wrote a sonnet the verses were not pro-





PLATE II.



duced by them merely for the sake of using a certain complicated formula of fourteen lines to make certain statements, nor when Pheidias carved the Athena or Praxiteles the Hermes was it merely with the idea of reproducing the human form in stone.

Had such been the motive of these poets and sculptors their results would have had small value; but each one of them had something to say that he could best express in the form chosen, some feeling towards life he wished to share with others, and in this outgiving he steadily sought to perfect the form that held his idea. The care he lavished on the verse and marble so that the expression of this thought might be the completest possible and truest to his idea, the delight in making his chosen art conform to the laws of language or of gravity, while at the same time it held the thought as a nest holds an egg, *that* was art for art's sake, and a very different matter from mere technical dexterity.

All the arts are alike means of conveying ideas from brain to brain and from the past and forgotten generations to those not yet thought of. No one school ever told the whole truth, but only that part of it maybe which local circumstances enable it to see. Each of them, from the earliest which faded away before recorded time, to the latest which looks eagerly forward to to-morrow with the hope of new accomplishment and absorption in new truths discovered, is but as the search-light casting its sharp-defined ray through the immeasurable dark. The flames of Priam's pyre crimsoning the night which hung over the "topless towers" were not marked on the Argive hills, but the message was flashed hither and yon over the star-tracked sea, raising now hopes now fears, till at Mycenæ

no answering flame was lit, but instead the young Phœnix was born.

And as no one school can answer all the questions, so no one single pundit can tell all the truth even of his own school. In each honest, unshamming workman there is something of truth, something others long ago thrilled to or that others yet to come may also feel, something that he knows with a clarity and conviction not to be equalled by any other. In a sense he does express his time, but neither the artist nor any man else is merely the product of his time, and the truly great ones go ahead of it, following the gleam of the divine spark which each man is born with to shelter in his heart as best he may. If it keep alight, by God's grace, his life becomes in truth art for art's sake, and he is one of the successful runners in the torch race across the great divide of life that separates the hopeless past from the hopeful future.

Of such there are many to spur on the weary and to guide the strayed back to the beacon path. In every man who has appealed to the masses, whose ears have rung and whose heart has swelled with the loud cries of "well done," there is, be sure, something of the ultimate divine truth — some no-mockery — some sincerity which heated in the fires of his soul and beaten with long pain and trouble on the anvil of his heart, shall be, if we can grasp it, a treasure undiminishing so long as we have breath to live.

Such an one was Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, whose life was almost coterminous with the seventeenth century (1598-1680). Honoured during life by three courts, and at that time court patronage was a very different thing to what it is now, he has of late been treated with a disregard which is



unjustified, and has been blamed for faults which were not his. These false judgments can be traced back to the envy of some of his contemporaries, who on the one hand accused him of ignorance of the mechanics of his art and of stupidity of design, and on the other, oftentimes, did their best to copy him. But it gives us pause when we consider that notwithstanding the forces of jealousy backed by powerful influence that were brought to bear on him he remained in the eyes of artistic Italy during his sixty and more working years the "Michael Angelo of the seicento." And this estimate of him, if we lay aside preconceived notions and formulas handed down to us by our parents, and look at his work with our own eyes and study it in the light of our own knowledge, will turn out to be the right one. Only the rash and heedless dare say of one who acquired such admiration in his own day that his work was poor and unworthy. And yet this is what is said. His style is said to be extravagant and artificial and his violent material effects are said to show that he was unable to express thought. Even the group of Apollo and Daphne is held to exhibit his ignorance of the proper domain of sculpture. It seems to me more likely that the judgment of the artists and critics of the seventeenth century is apt to be the correct one.

What would be artificial in an artist to-day was not so in Bernini, but was, if we could see it and free our hearts from the bonds of tradition, the most honest and simplest expression of a genius who had a new message for those who would take the trouble to understand. Frequently his work is criticised for not conforming to the "severe laws" of good sculpture and in this criticism lies the common fallacy of letting personal taste usurp the place of critical judgment. There are, of

course, laws of gravity, and of stress or strain to which a sculptor must conform because they are in the nature of the material he uses, just as there are optical laws which the painter should know; but there are no laws to fix what the artist may or may not represent or the forms which he should give to his representations. Personal taste is very well in its place, but it is not criticism; and severe laws are good training for our powers, but dependence on them leads to stagnation and not to discovery. Because the stage-coach follows the old gray road is it artificial of the aeroplane to soar through the trackless ether? Probably most critics, when they speak of severe laws as fixed and irrevocable, have in mind those followed by the Greeks of the fifth century B.C.—surely of no later time, for what of the violent material effects of Pergamon? But suppose portraits of the present-day business kings were carved according to the one-time valid classic laws? Strangely unlike the subject would such portraits be!

There is nothing ultimately right in severity nor ultimately wrong in violence. The money-changers were not led from the temple by a ribbon round their necks. The pioneer and path breaker must be violent. This was Bernini's work and purpose, and it is no more reasonable to blame him for the insincerity and stupidity of his followers than to blame Columbus for lynch law. As of many another, Bernini's fame has been dimmed by the follies and shams of his would-be imitators. Many tried to imitate and surpass him, but it was not to be done. He had the quality of genius which is more than the power of taking infinite pains. That his pupils had, but they merely exaggerated the form of the outer husk of his work till it lost all semblance of truth and became nothing



PLATE III.



but untruth and error. In him was the divine spark, the light of which showed new worlds for sculpture to work in and the heat of which moulded his material into the eternal forms of beauty.

The study of Bernini is established on very strong foundations, and the misinterpretation of his aims is inexcusable; for we have sure records of every kind concerning him. From his surprising youth to his busy old age we can trace his progress and the development of his powers. Of all his numerous works scarcely one is lost, and such as have disappeared are of no importance whatever in comparison with what remains. The full account of his life was written by two contemporaries, one of them his son, and this is amplified by many letters and other papers — accounts of payments for his work, stories of his doings, plans for work sometimes never undertaken and other times finally accomplished by himself or his pupils, that have been turned up into the light after long sleep in Italian archives.<sup>1</sup> It is all before us, and each chapter of his life can be recalled from the Elysian fields. We grow eager with the same hopes, we feel despondent at the same broken faith and pledges, we grow interested in the same companionships, we rest after the same magnificent accomplishments, and to the end we are keen in search of new worlds to open up.

Even the look of him we know; what the appearance was as he moved among the Popes and Kings, the Cardinals and Princes of Europe. What it was for a man they saw we too can see. What it was of a heart he felt dragging him on with

<sup>1</sup> Filippo Baldinucci Fiorentino. *Vita del cavaliere Gio. Lorenzo Bernini*. Firenze. 1682.

Domenico Bernino. *Vita del cavaliere Gio. Lorenzo Bernino*. Roma. 1713.

Stanislao Frascchetti. *Il Bernini*. Milan. 1900.



engine throbs we can guess when our amazed eyes rest on the Saint Theresa, the bust of Louis XIV, or the throne in St. Peter's. A strongly built, dark man, his thick hair whitening in old age, but the quick eye never losing its brilliancy and piercing glance. Of simple fashion in dress, as the pictures and drawings by himself and others show him, for all his love of rich stuffs and floating draperies. A ready and pleasant wit made him the best of company, though at times withdrawn into himself by some mystical absorption. For just as the great religious leaders, so the great artists are at times lifted by some ecstasy away from actual surrounding fact and lost in worlds only visible to their inner eye, and though visible never to be told of. At other times his spirits broke forth in irrepressible gaiety which though it might form itself as satire was never malevolent. Generous to a fault, and always ready to lift up a friend, he was implacable towards his enemies, and rightly showed them no mercy. He had the strength to be a good hater, — not feebly excusing hypocrisy and meanness because the hypocrite was weak or knew no better, but hating, not the poor miserable individual, but his qualities, and, to the best of his own power, destroying them. Proud and self-confident, but willing to answer questions or to explain what might seem faults. A lonely man; one with many acquaintances but few friends. Too sincere not to be shocked by the heartless brutishness of the woman he loved, too honest a workman not to be hurt by the attacks of envy, but never losing heart, always following his ideal and seeking to eternize the beautiful visions of his bright soul.

There are many portraits of him, some done with pencil or pen or graver, others more elaborate oil paintings. They

are the work of his friends, or done by himself, and show him at various periods of life from young manhood to old age. Naturally they vary in many ways, but the variance is for the most part in the details of the outer shell of the man. The thick dark locks of the youth give place to the thin gray hairs of the old man; the full cheeks grow sunken and wrinkles frame the piercing eyes; but in all the portraits certain characteristics remain constant. A pencil drawing in the Galleria Nazionale in Rome is the best of the youthful portraits.<sup>1</sup> It is by himself, done when he was some twenty years old. It shows a finely shaped head with thick, waving hair. The face is strongly modelled, and all the features noticeable; the nose large and slightly bent, the chin square and strong. Lips full and sensitive, but vigorous. Most noticeable of all are the eyes, large and dark, set rather deeply under heavy brows, looking straightly and sadly but imperturbably on the world. A face of power yet of sweetness. A man to ask after and to watch what he will do in this world. Rather older we see him in two drawings in the private collection of Prince Chigi in Rome.<sup>2</sup> Life was testing him severely we know, but the eyes are still steady, are still bright with the inner light that was leading him on, and the mouth is still sweet and undrawn.

Of about the same time, or a little later maybe, is the oil portrait supposed to be by himself (though for this there is little proof), in the Uffizi.<sup>3</sup> No change yet in the character except in a strengthening and making permanent the good qualities of his youth. The man has found himself. Many years go by before we again see him face to face.

<sup>1</sup> Fraschetti, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Fraschetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 425, 426.

<sup>3</sup> Fraschetti, *op. cit.*, p. 428.

In the Gallery of St. Luke<sup>1</sup> and in the possession of Count Andreozzi in Rome<sup>2</sup> are portraits of him in his last years, and a very fine pencil drawing by himself in the Brandegee Collection (Plate I). All his works were completed, his visits to the courts of Europe were over, he is the "Michael Angelo of the seicento," and yet he is just as simple in his dress and pose as ever. Obviously a great man whose ideals were so much greater to him than what he had accomplished that no possible flattery could disturb the balance of his mental poise. One change there is in the face more to be remarked than the higher forehead and the fuller chin. The eyes are still bright and level, the mouth still as soft and strong, but the sadness of expression has gone. Had he realized, I wonder, that soon all the sorrows of life would be hidden and lost under the gray church floor? Though the glad light of the sun no longer shone upon his life his face is bright with a mystical light as of the ranging stars which for countless thousands of years have guided the feet of man.<sup>3</sup>

It may be thought that I have given a fanciful interpreta-

<sup>1</sup> This portrait (Fraschetti, *op. cit.*, p. 434) is probably a copy of one owned by Baron Geymüller in London.

<sup>2</sup> Fraschetti, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

<sup>3</sup> In the Museum at Weimar is a portrait on which is written that it was done by Bernini himself, and as an *autoritratto* it has been published by Fraschetti (p. 433). It is a wretched performance, done not by Bernini, but by someone who had neither an observant eye nor a well-trained hand.

There is still another portrait which I think is very probably of him. It hangs in the Capitoline Gallery in Rome (Plate II), where it is called "Portrait of Velasquez, by himself," an attribution which no student of Velasquez would maintain to-day. The shape of the head and face and the expression are extremely like Bernini. Even the different shape and angle of the two eyebrows is the same as in his portraits. The quality of the hair is the same, and the way it grows over the temples. In the earlier portraits of him the hair is parted on the right side as in the Capitoline picture. The nose is very nearly the same as in the pencil portraits by himself in the National Gallery in Rome and in the Chigi collection.



PLATE IV.





tion to the change that came in his face from youth to old age, but it can be shown that some such thoughts as I have suggested moved him. About 1650, at a time when his enemies had attacked his work in St. Peter's and caused him great financial damage and still greater hurt to his natural and proper pride, the idea came to him to carve an allegory that should show the ages what his feeling towards his critics, towards art and towards life truly was. Allegories in painting or sculpture are usually, owing to the fixed limitations of these arts, unintelligible, but no artist ever lived who could have done as well as Bernini in making clear his idea with the material he used. Even if we did not have his own words about this group his thought would be seen, for his amazing command of technique and his knowledge of statics made it possible for him to combine figures with a freedom rarely equalled, and thereby to express himself with an ease and fulness beyond the powers of most sculptors of any time. Only one of the two figures which were to form the group was ever finished, but there is a sepia sketch showing the whole composition.

In it we see the winged figure of Time hovering above a beautiful woman from whose nude body he lifts a mantle. She is Truth; in her hand she holds an image of the Sun darting bright rays in all directions. This group meant much to him; was perhaps the most personal and truly expressive work he ever made, and till his death he kept it by him. In his will he says that not without reason has he kept this statue of Truth unveiled by Time which he wishes to remain for ever in the possession of his descendants who, as they look on it, may remember that the most lovely of the virtues is Truth and that if one works under her guidance Time in the end

reveals her. Are the "severe laws" of the ancients any more severe than this rule Bernini held before himself and wished his descendants never to forget, and is it sensible because at first sight his work seems strange and unaccountable to damn it with such words as "fantastic" or "baroque"?

The group was never finished, but in a dirty courtyard off the Corso in Rome, neglected as only the Italians know how to neglect such things till some outsider stirs their jaded appreciation to new interest, is the Discovered Truth. Time on hasty wings flies by, but as Bernini knew, Truth stays always, heedless of neglect, the fixed pole for all those who set their aim beyond the bounds within which their earthly eyes would prison them. And knowing this, it came to pass that his old face was lit with a peaceful smile as he came to the evening of life.

Bernini's work is of unusual variety, but the best of it falls into four classes. There are the wonderful groups illustrating old world myths that he produced in the full joy of life in his youth; there are the amazing religious monuments in which he embodied with unrivalled skill the mystical intensity of the religion whose chief priests he served; there are the superbly joyous settings for fountains which though the waters might dry up and cease to flow will still, so long as the stone lasts, echo their murmuring music; and there are the long series of magnificent busts on which he was employed from his very earliest days to his latest. He was besides author, painter, illustrator, and architect. I have no intention of cataloguing the long series of work his never idle hand produced, but wish merely to point out some of the forgotten beauties that he brought into being. In a measure, it is possible to trace the

source of his inspiration and in lesser degree to foresee its outcome.

His father, Pietro, a Florentine, was a sculptor of no mean power before him. His mother was of Naples, and in that southern, passionate city Gian Lorenzo was born in 1598 and there he passed his first years. Some day another Mendel may be able to establish what were the forces of Florentine and Neapolitan blood that lay dormant in his young brain, but for us is no such certainty, and we can only guess at the effect of the father's artistic occupations and the mother's quick blood. In 1604, when the boy was but six years old, his father moved to Rome, the city his son was destined to impress with his genius as no city but Athens has ever been impressed by a single artist. Working at first for his father, he was only fourteen years old when he drew to himself the attention of all the *connoscenti* by two busts which, as Annibale Carracci said, any artist after years of work might have been proud to make. The admiration Bernini won for these works, to which I shall return, led, as was the good habit of those days, to the patronage of the Borghese pope, Paul V.

In the Borghese villa, the ruined grandeur of which is still the chief pride of Rome, the young Bernini was surrounded by beautiful antique marbles, some of which he was called upon to restore. This familiarity with ancient sculpture, and this subjection in the task of restoration of his own spirit to that of classic masters, had a very marked effect on him — an effect which in its deepest sense lasted throughout his long life, though its more obvious and visible manifestation soon waned and faded away. That is to say, while his work at all times showed a perfect comprehension of some of the funda-

mental laws of the material out of which sculpture is formed, laws that were first clearly expounded by the Greeks, it is only in a few of his earliest, and for a youth miraculous, works that he shows a tendency to imitate classic form.

Four wonderful works were produced for the Borghese family. The Æneas and Anchises (Plate III), the David (Plate IV), the Rape of Proserpina (Plate V), and the exquisite group of Apollo and Daphne (Plate VI). All these were finished when he was only twenty-seven. Realizing this, the comparison of him with Michael Angelo no longer seems exaggerated, but one sees further that no such comparison can perform the ordinary service of all such juxtapositions, which is to afford a scale of better or worse, for the two masters are supreme, each in his own individual and original way, and incomparable.

Opinion may easily differ in regard to the first three of the works just mentioned. To me the Æneas is the least pleasing and the David the least successful artistically. The faults of both may be in part due to the fact that in each case Bernini's imagination was to a certain degree hampered by work of other men which he seems to have set himself to surpass, and even though it may be granted that he did surpass his models, he would have done better, as in the Proserpina and Daphne, to let his own genius lead him whither it would and ignore other suggestion. The models I refer to are, in the case of the Æneas, the Christ by Michael Angelo in Santa Maria sopra Minerva and for the David the Borghese Warrior now in the Louvre, both works of small merit.<sup>1</sup> The reason

<sup>1</sup> The Borghese Warrior was found at Anzio at the beginning of the seventeenth century. See Friederichs-Wolters, *Gipsabgüsse*, 1885, p. 541 f; Vulpinus, *Vetus Latium*, 1726, Vol. III, p. 28.





PLATE V.





the Æneas seems to me unpleasing is because of the weakness and unheroic look of the faces and figures, but others may not feel this, and the skill of the group is undoubted. The lack of success in the David is due to a slight failure in understanding the Greek motive that Bernini was copying. Whether or not he had in mind the Borghese Warrior as he carved this figure is a matter of slight importance. He was in any case representing a single figure in a position of strongly marked action, a problem that Myron magnificently solved in the Discobolus. The Borghese Warrior is by no means so successful. The David would rival the Discobolus had Bernini not made one mistake. The figure is turned to the wrong side. As he stands, the right arm drawn back, the left hand holding the stone in the sling in front of the body, the sling must fall loose and dead, the body must again be flung forward and the right arm swung upwards before the youth can get the momentum to hurl the stone at his enemy. Had Bernini turned the figure the other way with the left hand behind and the right in front of the body, this sense of ineffectiveness in the pose would not have existed, and the whole body would have been tensely set at the moment of rest between the action of drawing back for the aim and the instantaneously following motion of the cast.<sup>1</sup>

Though such slight criticism may be passed on these two works, the other two, the Proserpina and Daphne are not open to any similar attack. They are magnificent, and compel

<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable that the statue of St. Lawrence, in the Strozzi palace in Florence, which Bernini made at this time, was influenced by the Dying Gaul. The two statues resemble each other closely in many ways. There is a tradition that Michael Angelo restored certain small portions of the Gaul, but the character of the work of the restorations suggests Bernini rather than Michael Angelo.

admiration even from those whose training would tend to limit their preferences to work of another type. Never was the spirit of the two stories more fully understood or more adequately rendered. Never was marble managed in more masterful fashion and given such flux and flow of life. One's breath catches as one looks, for it seems no longer a work of art before one's eyes, but life itself. There is the dark, passionate rape of Proserpine, her splendid soft body shrinking and twisting in the grasp of the undeniable, compelling God of the underworld. There is the sweet, sad loss of Daphne, her exquisite springtime figure fading and changing into the rustling silver leaves in fright at the too hasty claim of her lover. Her face is still lovely, though the wide eyes and open mouth show her fear, but is there nothing in her fear of loss of her dear pursuer? And what of him? Not to be thought of as Olympian brother to the cruel, forceful Pluto. His face and action betoken the tenderness that would save the woman he loves from the heartless folly she would thoughtlessly commit. In the one group the storm and rush of passion; in the other the tender restraint of love. Both purely Greek and classic, and both carved with such consummate mastery that we forget the marble and see only the dark Tartarean glow and hear only the whispering of the sad leaves.

The perfection of technique displayed in the works of Bernini's youthful years is obvious to anyone with the slightest knowledge of sculpture. His knowledge of anatomy must have been almost instinctive, while he used the chisel with an ease that few painters could rival with a brush. His understanding, too, of balance and composition and of the forms the marble could be given was a revelation, and infinitely enlarged



PLATE VI.





the field of sculpture. As a mere group, the *Daphne* has never been surpassed, and Bernini himself recognised that, at least from the point of view of technique, none of his later works were any more marvellous. The spirit and character, however, of the later work are very different. It is worth noting that his method of production differs greatly from that of his predecessors. Hundreds of sepia drawings by him still exist which show the fertility of his invention and the labour he spent in getting the best design for his works. There are also many terra cotta models for his statues, and in all of these we see a directness in the way he approached his subject that differentiates him from the forerunners in the art. Among the Greeks, among the painters at least, it was not uncommon to think of the body and the drapery as separate and to draw or model the first entirely nude and then afterwards to put drapery over it. This habit was common enough during the Renaissance, and the studies of such men as Dürer and Leonardo show that it was not confined to the lesser men whose lack of skill and knowledge was helped by such double process.

But among all the hundreds of sketches on paper and models in terra-cotta that are left us of Bernini's work there is scarcely a trace of this method of procedure. He visualized each work in endless different ways, making rapid but most skilful studies of them all, but he saw the figure each time completed. The figures and drapery and setting were one indivisible whole to him, and his uncommon knowledge of anatomy, and the rare clearness of his mental vision, made it possible for him when the final form of the work was fixed upon to work at it from the outside inwards, and not, as in something built of blocks, from the inside outwards. And while his sketches differ in this

regard from those of most other artists, the variety of them, especially the very numerous ones for the same monument, show the pitch of excellence to which art had arrived, for these sketches are no longer the record of the artist's search to learn *how*, but of his eager search *how best*. Not that Bernini was unique in this. The fertility of invention of such men as Domenico Tiepolo is as that of a tree putting forth leaves, but no other artist illustrates these qualities and methods more completely and masterfully than our Gian Lorenzo.

I have mentioned above the originality displayed by men such as Michael Angelo and Bernini. Many another name could be added to these two, but it is not of men I wish to speak, but of this quality of originality, this crucible from which the old is drawn forth new, this Spring season of the mind which clothes the old, dry stumps with fresh life. The word is so often misused about the artists of to-day that its real significance is lost and true originality is too often imitated by a cheaper, rottener stuff. Every one of us is original in some degree. No one, unless he be mentally dead, sees or feels or believes as his father or grandfathers did before him. It may be the old belief was more correct and the old eyes were sharper than the new. Only the purblind and myopic think that all the early stages were wrong and that the solitary Present is alone right. Were this so, how hopelessly wrong this same Present would soon be! What a hideous precipice of error would this life's painful course appear! As in life, so it is in Art, and all artists are original who are genuine and honest, who are spurred on only by their ideals and their love for their work — who give up worshipping the xoana and

idols of a past day. It may be suggested that there is little difference, or perhaps even none, between one's own ideal and any other suggested to us by some wrought image, whether in stone or verse is no matter. But there is. There is the difference of life. The light of one is of the dying embers, but the light of the other is of the rising Sun which shows the path we follow till our feet grow slower and slower, till at the last they halt and stop fixed. While the idol remains but the symbol of the ideal it is right. When it becomes the God it is wrong, or when doubt has cut its roots and sapped its strength and we pay it service merely because to do so has become an easy habit. So it is we come to see that the originality of these artists was not mere novelty, but was truthfulness. It represents their beliefs, and what you believe you believe for yourself alone. It shows us what their real, sure-founded and enduring hopes and aims were. Mere novelty cannot be believed in because it is accidental. It has neither root nor promise of flower. It is the mirage of the salt desert, and it is this mere queerness, mere strain, mere novelty which is too often mistaken for originality. It is the paradox masquerading as the True Word. Just as this world whirls like a "fretful midge" through space, ever in the same track, a recurring course, but gradually unperceived moves elsewhither, so do the great artists revolve, and impelled not by their own wilfulness but by the power of the divine spark within them, slowly move forward. And among that splendid company is Bernini.

The terra cotta studies in the Brandege Collection <sup>1</sup> illustrate clearly Bernini's originality and the power to which

<sup>1</sup> In Brookline, Mass.; see p. 44 and Plates XI-XXVII.

I have referred above, of seeing his visions in their completeness without having to painfully build them up. I do not mean to imply that each separate detail of his works was the same in his first vision of them as in their finished form. He worked at them assiduously, and perfected them with the greatest patience and care, but when they came into his mind they rose before him like ghosts from the tomb — vague but entire.

It is noteworthy that most of these models are of angels, and as such represent the religious work by which Bernini is best known, and on which he was most often employed after his youth was past. By the time he was twenty-five years old he had been employed by three Popes, and before his death five others sought his aid and depended largely on his genius in their endeavours to beautify Rome and to render their own fame imperishable. These undertakings were of very various character, but the greater number of them, such as statues of Saints, decoration of chapels, altars and tabernacles, grave monuments of Popes and prelates, were done with religious purpose and may be called his ecclesiastical work. It is superb in its mastery, magnificent in effect, and while utterly different from anything that had been done before, gives the impression of complete and perfect sincerity. Though unlike earlier work and though the religion that inspired and made it possible has changed so that never again will an artist be able to give similar expression to his ideals, still there is no ground for considering it merely curious and the expression of insincerity or passing error. Anything that affected so many thousands of men, which they found beautiful and satisfying to their souls, must be in a measure true,





PLATE VII.





must have in it some portion of ultimate wisdom. Silence or contempt towards it, any feeling but of sympathy with it, shows not a better knowledge but a duller understanding.

During the sixteenth century a great change had come about in the way men looked at life. Discoveries were made of all sorts; on land for men's feet to follow or in mathematics and philosophy for their souls to reach up to. Old dogmas became untenable and the roofs with which men had sheltered their heads became scaffolding on which they planted their feet. It was a time of revolution — the revolution of the wheel of life which advances as it turns. I have called attention to the fact that the artists in their search for the fullest possible expression of their thought often threw off dozens of designs for a single work before finding the one most adequate. Technique no longer hampered them in the slightest way, and they readily changed their mode in accordance with new views, no longer blindly following the old guides. The work of Titian is one of the most obvious illustrations of this. In his youth he followed, like the Indian, the steps of his leaders, but as he aged, he broke from them more and more, till at the end he arrived in a world his teachers could never have imagined. Bernini had a similar experience.

One of the commonest complaints brought against Bernini is that he introduced the habit of decorating the archivolts or domed roofs of the churches with figures of angels fluttering about like great white birds, and in this complaint no distinction is made between the idea that underlay this scheme of decoration and the inappropriate and exaggerated use of it made often by his imitators. From the earliest times of the Renaissance, this scheme had been used. Bernini did not

invent it. The Gothic portals and towers of France are crowded with figures of saints and kings, of angels and demons. In orderly ranks they guard the gates or singly spring into mid air from the balconies. In Italy the shepherds of the people stood in pulpits which rested on the strong shoulders of Christ's soldiers or on the steady wings of the heavenly host, while high o'erhead (as in the Portinari Chapel in S. Eustorgio, Milan), a ring of winged figures, hand holding hand, danced and sang, and down the long aisles and in the dark chapels every sleeper in his stony bed was guarded by the faithful spirits.

Why then find fault with Bernini and think he erred in doing what all the world found good? If Bernini is mistaken in putting marble figures above our heads, why excuse Correggio for the circling swarms with which he covered the church domes, or Michael Angelo for the cataract of figures with which he covered the Sistine Chapel? All such work must be considered for its suggestion, not from the point of view of its actual substance. Why, if the conventional and halting work of the nameless early artists is good, should the masterly work of Bernini be considered bad? Only because the modern world thinks it foolish to believe in anthropomorphic angels and having no belief, has lost the power of understanding symbols. And also the antagonism Bernini's work arouses is due to the fad for the primitive and incomplete. The very lack of power that every early artist tried to rid himself of is now thought to be his chief value and grace, and as in the daily press a missing word puzzle attracts more attention than a sonnet so the halting early work finds more admirers than the later perfect art.



PLATE VIII.





Perfect as they are, there is something more than anthropomorphism in Bernini's angels. Earlier artists, even the best of the Florentines, when representing these heavenly messengers, almost always make them so solid and human that the wings are utterly inadequate, or else they suggest the body by a thin and shapeless swirl of drapery topped by a perfectly substantial head. In either case the result is unsatisfactory, for though the figures conform to the usual idea of angels as effeminate human forms with wings, the chief impression they make is of inconsistent and impossible anatomical combinations.

They fail just as the archaic Greek centaurs with human feet fail. When one looks at Bernini's angels, the two done in his youth for the altar of Sant' Agostino, or the two for instance which he carved in later years for the Ponte Sant' Angelo, but which were considered too beautiful to be exposed in the open air and are now sheltered in Sant' Andrea delle Fratte (Plates VII, VIII), or at the one which kneels on the left hand of the *Ciborio* in the *Cappella del Sacramento* in Saint Peter's, one has no sense of unreality. The bodies are human in form, but spiritual in their lightness and grace. The wings are strong and large, and yet so feathery as to seem almost transparent. The drapery falls and clings to and fits the body as a cloud might, and the face and action express a perfect and soul-filling adoration that finds expression in tireless worship and unending song of praise. These are the true "sexless souls, ideal quires."

This same strong religious feeling is shown with equal certainty in other figures by Bernini which are better known than his angels. These are the figures of saints which he

made in his middle and later years. The earliest of them, that of Santa Bibiana, done in 1626, when he was still a young man, shows in the arrangement and pose of the figure the influence of the antique. The technique exhibits the same magnificent ease and the same power of reproducing the various qualities of drapery and flesh and hair that we saw before in the Borghese groups, and there is in the face and gesture the expression of self-effacement in religious ecstasy that is the most noticeable quality of the later figures of this kind. As he grows older, these two characteristics of technical differentiation of surface and of ecstatic expression altered. While he lost no atom of technical power he tended to lay less stress on the appearance of the mere surface of his figures and to pay more attention to and show forth more clearly their mental condition. In doing this he brought into being figures as truly representative of the religion of his time as those of Michael Angelo or any other sculptor of any epoch.

Religious emotion must always call forth strong feeling, but the strength is sometimes shown in terms of apparent restraint, at others it shows itself in violent action. Athena Parthenos is as emotional as the Santa Theresa and Savonarola, and Luther is as violent as the Crusaders. The seventeenth century was a time when men thought it no shame to show their feelings. The Puritans showed them as clearly as the Italians, though in a less pleasant form. If to-day it is difficult to realize and sympathize with the sentiment shown in Bernini's Sant' Andrea, or Daniel, or Maria di Magdala, it is not because of our superiority, but rather because we have lost a very precious sense and power of spiritual levitation. Look at the Habakkuk. Is it not a splendid presentation of

the prophet who was burdened with the grievance which he beheld, who saw for so long the righteous compassed about by a "bitter and hasty" race that he felt the Lord would never respond to his cry? But even as he complains the visible answer of the Lord appears, and the Angel with playful tenderness pulls at his hair so that his face is upturned to the light of Heaven, not any longer dark with earth's despair, as he bids him write the vision of the Lord's judgment that shall not tarry — write it so that he may run who readeth. And Habakkuk still points to the iniquity that blackens the world and the angel points to the inevitably approaching woe. It is superbly original. It is deeply felt.

The St. Jerome in the Duomo at Siena is another very striking figure; if it seems to most observers unpleasant, this is mainly because it does not conform to the conventional and uncharacteristic way they are accustomed to see Jerome represented. As a subject for artists he has been treated far more often by painters than by sculptors, and in the paintings the mere beauty of colour and of surroundings adds charms which are uncharacteristic of, and distract from, the real interest of the figure. When carved by Bernini, there is nothing but the figure to consider — whether it be suggestive of the real man as we know him by his writings or not. Probably most people if asked what image the name of the saint brought to their minds would recall the print by Dürer or some painting such as that by Catena in the National Gallery. But splendid as the print and the painting are, it is only by a pleasant fiction and by refusing to regard the truth that they can be thought to represent in any way the Saint as he was among men. They show a very gentle old man in the neatest

and quietest of surroundings, peacefully writing his comments on the scriptures.

It can hardly be supposed that his contemporaries regarded Jerome primarily as a peaceful and abstracted scholar. Surely Bernini did not, but instead shows us the unhappy wanderer and ascetic monk. Scholarship was only one phase, and among the people with whom he lived scarcely the most important phase of St. Jerome's life. To his contemporaries he showed himself chiefly as an acrid controversialist taking a leading part in the "strife of tongues." Unhappy in his Pannonian home, he spent a restless youth wandering over Europe, but instead of peace found only momentary forgetfulness in pleasures, the remembrance of which brought deep sorrow in his later years. Then he turned to asceticism and sought by living as an anchorite in the desert to conform himself to the teachings of his Lord. But the degradation of such a life, the unnatural and disgusting view it took of the image of his Maker and the temple of his soul, the morbid introspection and sterility of selfish self-mortification, brought him trouble and pain, not calm, till, at last, an old man, he died in Bethlehem thoroughly disheartened with the iniquity of the world and the horrors resultant on the destruction of Rome by the barbarians.

Such is the man Bernini sets before us. The battered, way-worn feet; the strong, coarse body; the ragged, unkempt hair show the life he led. The face bending with closed eyes dreamily over the figure of the crucified Christ betrays his holy, misdirected zeal. What he was, and what he stood for, could not be shown more clearly than our sculptor has shown it here.



Equally fine, and in certain ways more beautiful, is the statue of Daniel in the lions' den, which Bernini made in 1656 for Cardinal Chigi, who placed it with the Habakkuk in Santa Maria del Popolo. The youthful and splendidly built figure rests on one knee, his hands upraised in attitude of prayer, his head bent back with eyes wide open gazing upwards. From one shoulder, beside his body and over his legs, falls in wind-blown folds a single heavy mantle. A great lion crouches behind him, licking his foot. In its perfect physical beauty, in its not over-emphasised anatomy and in its entirely successful composition, by which great movement is given the appearance of completeness and stability, the figure is more closely allied to Bernini's earlier works than to the mystical passionate figures such as the Jerome or Mary of Magdala or others of this period. It is unnecessary to dwell on the beauty of the figure and the technical skill it displays, for these can be seen by anyone whose eye and hand have been trained at all.

There is one less obvious point, however, to which I wish to draw attention, for it is as good an example as could be of what I have mentioned above. I refer to the way the legs show through the heavy drapery that covers them. The mantle does actually clothe the leg. It is not a mere addition. It takes its shape and movement from the leg beneath it. The one cannot be thought of without the other. Were the statue destroyed, and did only the right hip or left knee remain, one would instantly recognise what parts of the figure these were. But classic though the figure is in general appearance — it might almost be one of the Niobids — the feeling of absolute ecstatic faith is very clearly given in the



upturned face and the reaching arms.<sup>1</sup> Now there have been times — great and noble times — when men did believe that God would send angels to shut the mouths of lions, and when men felt no fear, but only a carefree trust in His help if true innocency could be found in them.

Such work is not baroque, nor decadent, nor over-emotional, as it is commonly and thoughtlessly said to be, but it is a very adequate and convincing representation of a powerful and uplifting spiritual condition. It is just as fine as the graver and more sombre figures of Greece, or as the sad and ponderous figures of Michael Angelo.

Of all the figures of this period in Bernini's development the most famous is the Saint Theresa (Plate IX). It is hopeless to express in words the great beauty of this figure. This can no more be done than the full perfection of any great poem can be rendered in a translation. The work is perfect in itself, and what of this kind can be shown in sculpture is here expressed with complete and ultimate adequacy. That most people are startled and shocked when they first see the figure is due to the fact that they do not think of what the scene really means, and they are not accustomed to seeing scenes of divine significance treated with perfect simplicity and pure faith.

Not that such scenes ought not to be so treated, but few are the artists who feel deeply enough or whose technique is finished enough to enable them to represent a scene of this sort so clearly and beautifully. As a result, the artist falls back on forms which have been repeated so often that they have become conventional and no longer can give the beholder

<sup>1</sup>The head reminds one of the Capitoline Alexander, which Bernini may have seen.



PLATE IX.



the full impression of their meaning. No one is offended on seeing the Son of God bleeding on the cross around which surges a host of idle spectators, or at seeing Him in the manger before which all the nobles of Florence kneel in various theatrical attitudes. But Saint Theresa is a figure new to them, and to have her shown in the crisis of her ecstasy with other figures looking on from the walls of the chapel, offends their "sense of propriety" and seems "paradoxical," "perfervid" and "inconsequent."<sup>1</sup>

Were this a fair criticism, a large number of the most beautiful works of Christian art would fall under the same condemnation. Far more paradoxical than Bernini's figure are the representations of the Marriage of Saint Catharine, and they are quite as unpleasing if thought of in their literal sense. As for the figures looking at the Saint from the "opera boxes" at the sides of the chapel, it must be remembered that at this time most of the drama in Italy was founded on religious subjects, and such dramatic representation made a very deep appeal to men's minds. The critics who find the Saint Theresa in bad taste do not hesitate to form part of the audience when Christ's Passion is played among the hills of Oberammergau, and they will no longer be afraid to render Bernini the homage that is his due when they cease lazily to measure his work by conservative standards. The glory of a comet is not measured by the Eddystone Light nor a miracle by the conventions of ordinary society.

One other point concerning this statue remains to be considered. A recent critic<sup>2</sup> says that "there are many ecsta-

<sup>1</sup> Balcarres, *The Evolution of Italian Sculpture*, p. 333-334.

<sup>2</sup> Balcarres, *op. cit.*, p. 334.



sies, and Bernini has chosen something that borders closely on the most displeasing." In this he expresses a common opinion, based, I believe, on a misconception, and on ugly, puritanical prudishness. Possibly there are many ecstasies, but religious ecstasy, the ecstasy of the Saint in joining herself to the spiritual existence of Christ, and the pure and natural ecstasy of love when self is lost in the future of the race, are as nearly as possible identical. The Venus de Medicî is far more displeasing than the Saint Theresa.

In one portion of the group Bernini certainly did fail, and in a way that is surprising. Usually his figures of angels are successful, but the one standing over Saint Theresa is assuredly very bad. Its figure is unconvincing, and its face, with tilted nose and silly smile, is more that of a Greek *paniskos* than of a heavenly messenger. But notwithstanding this blemish, no work by Michael Angelo or any other sculptor ever made the beholder forget so completely the substance out of which it is carved, and think only of the scene represented as Bernini has done here. He has given the softness of life to the snow-white stone. His hand and mind worked in perfect accord and produced a work unrivalled in technique and of very great beauty.

Another statue of similar character is the Beata Albertona. It is a little less delicate in treatment and more emphatic in expression than the Saint Theresa, but is, none the less, of very great beauty and power.

Were a man's failures as worth study as his successes, I could mention works by Bernini which are distinctly bad. The Maria di Magdala is one. Though full of feeling, the figure of the Saint is coarse and clumsy. But though a man's



defeats show, of course, the principles for which he stood, his victories are more worth considering and are the fairest test of him. A very false estimate of Michael Angelo would result if one considered the Rondanini Pietà, the David, or the Christ in Santa Maria sopra Minerva as of equal importance with his other works.

It was not only in works in marble that Bernini showed his power as a sculptor. He handled dark, impressive bronze with the same complete understanding of its qualities and possibilities that he showed in carving the gleaming Carrara marble. Such a work as the *Baldacchino* in St. Peter's is beyond any words to praise. It is enormous, but not clumsy, and sumptuous without being ornate. The most stupendous of his bronze works is not, however, the *Baldacchino*, but the Throne, the *Cattedra* in the apse of St. Peter's. It was in 1657, during the pontificate of Alexander VII, that Bernini was ordered to carry out his design for this work, and eight years later it was finished and uncovered to the admiration of all Rome.

This monument is too well known to need detailed description here, but it is well here to recall its purpose, which was not for actual ceremonial use by the Popes, but to serve as a frame, or strong-box, for the ancient chair of carved ivory on which tradition said, and the whole Catholic world then believed, St. Peter had himself sat. There in the heart of the greatest Christian Church, raised above the soiling earth, high in air for the thronging worshippers to behold, was to be the visible and material sign of infallibility. Bernini alone had the feeling that made him capable of such a task. Four magnificent figures of Doctors of the Church support the

chair — two of the Western church, Saint Augustine and Saint Ambrose, and two of the Eastern, Saint Chrysostom and Saint Athanasius. Stately great figures ; on their outstretched hands they hold the Throne with the ease that comes of perfect faith, raising it up even as sixteen hundred years before the Apostles had raised up this earth for the glory of God.

In all these religious works by Bernini there is beside the expression of the faith that begot them the expression of a decorative sense, something dramatic. He delighted in movement and expression for the mere sake of beauty of active form, and this feeling of joy in life, in the spirit of movement, whether in Nature or in Man, Bernini reproduced in a series of works which by themselves would make him unique among all sculptors and which give Rome a distinction and character far more decisive than her ruins or palaces and set her alone and apart from all other cities. These are the fountains.

The list of fountains is of amazing length. The Barcaccia in the Piazza di Spagna, one in the Villa Mattei, one in the Vatican Gardens, another in the Barberini Gardens, the Triton in the Piazza Barberini; the lovely shell which used to be on the corner of the Via Sistina, but has been destroyed to make way for modern improvements so called; in the courtyard of the Palazzo Antamoro, in the Piazza Navona, and the broad pool of the Fountain of Trevi. They have the infinite variety and infinite pleasantness of Nature herself. By the side of the placid pool whence the *ciociaras* draw the water for their flowers, or where the sparkling stream of the Triton shoots heavenward from the gray pavements like a white crocus from the frosty ground in Spring; where the Nile, the Ganges, the Plata and the Danube pour forth their

incessant floods, or where Neptune shepherds his foaming steeds over the rocks as they dash down into the pool that if we once drink from our hearts evermore yearn for the Eternal City — by each and all of his fountains our ears are filled with the pleasant voices of the waters and our eyes with the sight of the nymphs and nereids who gambolled among the water-courses when the world was young.

What the secret of their charm? No one ever understood the artistic value of water as Bernini did. No one else ever held in check the full stream and gave it back again the ripples, and spurts and sudden rushes of its upper course and of its source. The angels must have washed his spirit in the fountain of eternal youth to enable him to express the joy which flowed through his veins in the undying music of the waves, moulding and combining them to his intention as a musician makes the rough strings of his instrument sing of the life that lies hidden in them till his knowing touch gives them voice.<sup>1</sup>

I have spoken of the groups representing classic myths, of the innumerable statues motived by religion and of the fountains, but even this huge mass of work does not come near completing the list of Bernini's output. The numerous portraits remain to be considered. Some, such as the Constantine in St. Peter's, were ideal, but most were of his patrons and friends and were of very varied types. There were colossal equestrian statues, ordinary busts, full-length figures and groups for tombs, and they show that he possessed just

<sup>1</sup> In relation to the influence of ancient work on Bernini, it is worth note that the four great figures in the Piazza Navona are very Hellenistic in character and would, if turned into reliefs with their surrounding trees and animals, resemble closely the fountain-reliefs of the Græco-Roman world.

as great skill in direct portraiture as in more purely imaginative work.

To carve or paint a successful portrait, two powers are absolutely essential to the artist. On the one hand he must have the sympathy that will enable him to comprehend the sitter's character, and to see what lines and expressions of the face express that character most clearly; on the other he must have the power of suppressing his own individuality and of lending his hand and eye, as it were, to the sitter to make the portrait himself. If the artist lacks sympathy, he will produce a work which may be correct in all detail of colour, line and modelling, but it will only be a sort of mask; if he lacks the power of self-suppression, the work will be unlike the sitter, even though true in detail, because it will show not his character, but that of the artist. Bernini illustrates these points with perfect precision, and as a result his portraits are unsurpassed by those of any other artist of the Renaissance and are far finer than the quaint efforts of the earlier sculptors which many students of art admire with the enthusiasm of decadence and a fatuous misunderstanding of both the value of art and the aim of the artist.

Just as it was fortunate for Turner that in his early years he was forced to draw with painstaking accuracy, so was Fate kind to the young Bernini in giving him to do, when he was but fourteen or fifteen years old, the portraits of two well-known Prelates. Success in these meant fame and an assured future for the boy. Like every genius he must have felt, with perfect simplicity, with no conceit, his power; but what must have been his feelings of tremulous satisfaction when, the busts unveiled, the crowd of Cardinals and Prelates who were gathered



to see his work, broke into enthusiastic applause? The cheering words of those long since silent voices echo again in our hearts as we look at these busts of the Bishop Santoni and of Monsignor Montoya, for two more perfect portraits can hardly be found.

A mere child made them; a boy whom one could more easily think of playing at marbles in the sunlit street; but instead his playground is the Temple of the Lord and his toys the souls of men. The mere knowledge of anatomy and the technical skill they show is most unusual for one so young, but what shall be said of the spiritual insight of the artist who carved these two bowed heads with their sweet, strong, grave faces? The excellence of the ancient Greek, in certain forms of sculpture, has given us his name as an adjective to express one kind of superlative merit and these two busts can, with perfect accuracy, be called Greek. They are as like as can be to the bronze bust by some unknown Grecian sculptor which in the Museo dei Conservatori bears the name of Brutus.

As in his other work, so in the making of portraits Bernini soon broke away from traditional methods and gave his own spirit full sway. This is evident in the bust of Costanza Buonavelli, his mistress, which is one of the treasures of the National Museum in Florence. It is not only the technical skill with which he gave the different qualities of the pleated dress, the round soft neck and cheeks and the blown tresses of waving hair that make this portrait so remarkable, but beyond this one sees in it the artist's own human love for the actual woman and his delight in her as a suggestion of a beautiful work of art. This bust is unique among his works, for the woman who inspired it then, with thoughtless animal selfish-



ness, killed the inspiration she had begotten. The bust is the tombstone for the most sensitive part of Bernini's heart.

Among the other busts of his early years are one of his great patron Paul V (Borghese) and two of his steadfast friend Cardinal Scipio Borghese.<sup>1</sup> They are all of them noteworthy, but the finest is the first one he made of the Cardinal. In this the growth of Bernini's dramatic feeling is very plain and is shown in a technical way which he repeated many times thereafter. It is this. He carves not alone the head and a small portion of the breast, but he gives the whole upper part of the torso and arms and skilfully suggests by the turn and position of this part the action of the whole body, so that as one looks at this bust of Scipio Borghese, one has the feeling of seeing not his head alone but his whole figure. The wonderful realism with which Bernini has rendered the crinkly silk cape and the rolling flesh of the fat face with the lips just parted as though the burly Cardinal were whistling for breath is obvious to the most casual observation; but realistic though the bust is, Bernini was skilful enough to give chief emphasis to the character of the sitter so that the impression that one takes away with one is not of the external appearance of the figure so much as of his nature and quality as a man. In many ways it closely resembles the portrait of Pope Innocent by Velasquez.

Other portraits are to be seen not only in Rome, but in Modena, at Versailles and even at Windsor; for, as Bernini's fame spread, the great people all sought him and even Louis XIV and Charles I were delighted to have the artist give them

<sup>1</sup> The one of Paul V is in the Villa Borghese, Rome; the other two are in the National Gallery, Venice.



PLATE X.



that immortality which neither their deeds nor position could assure them. One of the quieter and less dramatic works is the beautiful bust of Monsignor Francesco Barberini. It is realistic like the Cardinal Borghese, but the realism is made subordinate to a higher aim and only used to emphasise the ideal character of the work.

Numerous as are these effigies by Bernini of Popes and lesser men, there are two which stand out above all the rest as unsurpassed in art and as combining and illustrating more fully than any others the character of the time, of the sitter and of the artist which, all together, made them possible. They are of Francis I of Este, now in Modena, and of Louis XIV (Plate X), at Versailles. The first was made in 1651, the second during Bernini's visit to Paris in 1665. Only Bernini was capable of representing these two proud princes in all their splendour of ornamental wig, and lace and armour. It demanded technique such as his to make anything but a great lump of complex and ugly form out of such settings for the head as these; and he succeeded, to the unquestioned admiration of all time.

That was an epoch when men liked theatrical display of all sorts, when what in these colder days seems exaggerated expression was natural and pleasing to people. Bernini knew and understood this, had often himself been employed in writing plays or arranging stage scenery, and has represented the two rulers just as they delighted to show and think of themselves, adorned with all that was rich and splendid, haughty and disdainful as was the nature of those endowed with the divine right of Kings. Even more than in the case of the portrait of Cardinal Borghese do these two busts seem to

make us see the whole figure and yet they have an appearance of lightness that is most surprising. Not to be made again such busts — nor such men. Democracy, and a belief in equality as absurd as that in Kingship was overweening, have snuffed out all such pretensions, and have snuffed out the art too. But thanks to Bernini we have the record of them. We see them in their moment of splendid satisfaction and self-confidence, and made beautiful through mere enjoyment of their bubble reputation.

The final value of portraiture is that it should be characteristic of the person depicted. No matter how great the skill shown in giving Napoleon the appearance of a Greek athlete or Washington that of Olympian Zeus, such works are only folly and waste. Bernini made no such mistake, but with deep insight and unrivalled skill proved himself one of the greatest portraitists of all time.

I have spoken of Bernini's versatility. I have considered in some detail the sculpture by which he is best remembered. Of his painting not much is left, and what remains is naturally not of any great value as art. Still less is left of his work as an organiser of plays and arranger of processions or carnival displays. A few drawings and engravings and some slight accounts by contemporaries give us an idea of this work of his, but it was the occupation of his more idle hours and is of little moment. Of his architectural work a good deal is still to be seen, though in many instances later workmen have added to or altered the original structure, which was almost always skilful and big in conception, though occasionally he made a mistake, as when he put the towers — asses' ears his contemporaries called them — on the Pantheon.



The structure by which Bernini is best known is the double colonnade of the Piazza of St. Peter's. Of this his original sketch book still exists.<sup>1</sup> It is an intensely interesting record of the different schemes and plans which Bernini worked at till in the end he produced the splendid simple and grand design which gives Rome the finest public square in the world.

There are several sheets of drawings in the book, some showing Leonardesque studies of the relations between the proportions of the human figure and those of architecture, others show views down the Borgo from the church or looking up towards St. Peter's with plans for the rearrangement of the district, and some are views and designs of various types of colonnade showing deep study of their perspective appearance. But of all these sketches, there is one of far greater interest than all the others, for it shows that insight into the deeper meaning of things which made Bernini the supreme genius he was (Plate XXX).

On this sheet are two similar drawings showing St. Peter's and the colonnade. Over these, as though they formed the head and arms of a cross, is drawn a bearded figure, his head crowned by the dome of the church, his arms outstretched on the colonnades and with his feet crossed slightly one above the other and resting just where, at the beginning of the Borgo, Bernini intended, as another of the sketches makes plain, to put a building. There can be no doubt, after seeing this drawing, that Bernini's intention was to make the Piazza symbolic of

<sup>1</sup> In the Brandegee Collection. It was published by Signor Busiri-Vici in his work *La Piazza Vaticana*, Rome, 1890, and by Frascchetti, *op. cit.*, p. 307. The latter gives reduced and poor reproductions of the drawings. We have thought it worth while therefore to reproduce them on a larger scale; see Part III of this Study.

Christ and the Crucifixion. Evidently not a mere builder of houses this man Gian Lorenzo Bernini, but somehow, and somehow, he has got a poet's vision and he makes his mark in the world not merely by moulded clay and shaped stones, but by shaping men's hearts and moulding their ideas.

Such was Bernini, one of the great artists of the world. It is true that he was revolutionary, but he destroyed not through ignorance or envy. He destroyed merely that he might then create. The arts in his day were strangled by academic rules and had become cold and lifeless. The intensity with which he felt things gave him strength to break these bonds and to make sculpture once more a means of conveying living thoughts and emotions. He was like the butterfly which tears away the stiff-plated chrysalis before it can spread its wings in the free air. It is useless to try to explain his technical skill; he was born with it, just as others are born with a keen sense of colour or a musical ear, but it is certain that without it he could never have carved such figures as the Saint Theresa or the portrait of Fonseca <sup>1</sup> which show intense emotion brought on by loss of all sense of self in the contemplation of the mystical meaning of the Passion. Such feeling could not be shown by restrained action and quiet faces. Much movement was necessary and the works are successful and beautiful because the feeling shown is perfectly simple and natural and not forced and put on for the sake of effect.

Bernini's technical power made him, however, a *bàd* master for others to imitate. Not that the work of his followers is any more inane than that of the copiers of Michael Angelo

<sup>1</sup> In San Lorenzo in Lucina, Rome.

or of those of any other great man, but his peculiarities were such as are at least superficially easy to see. Where he quite easily and simply distinguished between the appearance of silk or flesh, his imitators wasted their energies on elaborate arrangements, the only object of which was to show technical dexterity. Where he carved figures that are racked and torn with feeling, the imitators gave forms that are contorted and as unemotional as gymnasts. But he is not to be blamed for their work. By no means was he one of the blind leading the blind. He was the seer, the prophet, by odd chance honoured in his own home, whose visions were so believed by his followers that they vainly tried to see the like. What their eyes strained towards and failed to see, his heart yearned for and gained. To them praise was a prize to win, to him it was a spur to renewed effort and further advance. He had faults, as who has not, but they were due to his being a path-breaker and having to find out for himself ways to carve and show figures such as no sculptor before him had ever dreamed of; they were not the faults of ignorance or stupidity. If it be well for us that we judge not lest we be judged, so too is it well, should we judge Bernini or other men, to judge not what there is in him of weakness or failure, but what there may be of noble intention and high endeavour. Doing this we shall see that Bernini, working always with bowed heart, but with uplifted spirit, broke down the middle wall of partition between art and life.

## II. A COLLECTION OF SCULPTOR'S MODELS BY BERNINI

THE clay models by Bernini, descriptions of which follow, form one of the most interesting artistic records left us of the sculpture of the Renaissance. Drawings made by the painters of that period to serve as studies for their pictures are not uncommon, but the sketch-models made by the sculptors are rare.

This is because sculptors carved the marble without any previous models, as Michael Angelo frequently did, or else that the models, being cumbrous and of material that was easily destroyed, have, in the course of years, been got rid of either intentionally or by accident. It may seem strange to suggest that the clay of which the sculptors may have made their studies is more liable to destruction than the paper used by the painters, but it must be remembered that while nothing is more durable than baked clay, air-dried clay is extremely perishable. Wax was also used by the sculptors for their preliminary sketches, but this, owing to expense, could never have served for work of any great size or quantity; and even if less apt to complete disintegration than unbaked clay, it is very liable to injury.

What precisely was the origin of this collection of Bernini's models we cannot tell; but it is our great good fortune that when they were made there was some one, perhaps one of



PLATE XL.







PLATE XII.





b



a





Bernini's pupils, who cared for them and saw to their being properly dried or baked so that they have preserved their pristine freshness. It is also extremely fortunate that their present owner realized their great beauty and extreme interest and added them to the artistic treasures stored in America, where they will serve in the ages to come to show students and sculptors a clear reflection of the mind of one of the world's greatest artists.

In the Museum at Berlin are other models by Bernini, but there is, so far as I know, no other collection, either public or private, that approaches the Brandege Collection in number, variety or excellence of these works. In America I know of but one other model purporting to be by Bernini. It is in the Morgan collection and represents Pope Urban VIII, but it does not show a single touch by the master; it is an imitation, copied from the statue in the Campidoglio at Rome. In the collection of the late Mme. Edouard Aynard, sold in Paris, December 1-4, 1913, were two terra-cotta models of angels (lot 307) "*attribuées au chevalier Bernin, d'après les originaux du port Sant Ange, à Rome,*" and one equestrian statuette in the same material (lot 308), said to be the "*esquisse originale de la statue en marbre de Louis XIV, dans le parc de Versailles, par le chevalier Bernin.*" The two angels are certainly not by Bernini; the portrait may be.

From the artistic point of view these models are of the highest importance, for they show with startling clearness the great fertility of invention which characterized Bernini and the vivid way in which he visualized the creations of his brain. There is not a trace of effort in them, there is not a sign of rubbing out or doing over, but each group or figure

was obviously seen by him with the sharpness of a dream and reproduced by his skilful fingers in the fresh clay while the impulse and uplift of the vision was still on him.

The knowledge of the purely technical side of the art of sculpture which the models reveal is magnificent. The way, for instance, in which the various planes are treated in the oval relief of the Virgin and Child (Plate XXVI) is as subtle as, and very similar to, that of the reliefs on the ancient vases from Arezzo, while the relation of draped portions of the figures to the parts left nude, and the manner in which the body beneath gives life and meaning to the covering drapery, is as fine as any work by Pheidias.

But the most fascinating and interesting characteristic of these terra-cotta figures is that one sees in every least portion of them how Bernini's fingers, trained by long years of hard practice, played over the wet clay like wavering flame and moulded the dead material to enduring forms of beauty. Once more the old mythology comes true, and Pygmalion, taking the rough material offered him by Mother Earth, fondled it, and, warming it with the fires of his brain, gave it back the life that lies asleep till the lover's kiss wakes it once again.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE MODELS

#### NO. 1. — PLATE XI

Seated female figure in high relief, wearing helmet, and heavily draped; the left cheek rests on the back of the raised left hand. Feet missing.

For the tablet in memory of Carlo Barberini in Santa Maria d'Aracoeli, Rome.

Width 10 inches.

#### NO. 2. — PLATE XII

Figure of Longinus, in St. Peter's. In the round, and gilded.

Height  $20\frac{3}{4}$  inches.



a



b





a



b











PLATE XVII.







PLATE XVIII.



No. 3. — PLATE XIII, *a*

Two *putti*, for the decoration of the piers in St. Peter's. High relief. The scale of measurement is scratched on the right edge. The wings are broken from the lower figure.

Height  $11\frac{1}{8}$  inches.

No. 4. — PLATE XIII, *b*

Another two *putti*, also for St. Peter's. The scale of measurement is scratched on the left edge. The wings are broken from the upper figure.

Height  $11\frac{3}{8}$  inches.

## Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8. — PLATES XIV, XV

Four heavily draped bearded male Saints, for the *Ciborio* in the *Cappella del Sacramento* in St. Peter's.

The figures stand on thin, square plinths, one of which (Height  $10\frac{3}{8}$  inches; PLATE XIV, *a*) is unmarked, but on the other three are the names *Bartolomeo* (Height  $10\frac{1}{4}$  inches; PLATE XV, *b*), *Tomaso* (Height  $10\frac{3}{8}$  inches; PLATE XIV, *b*), and *Filippo* (Height 10 inches; PLATE XV, *a*).

The heads of all four are turned to the left, and the figures rest their weight on the right leg. The left arm of the *Bartolomeo* is gone, but was outstretched; the others all stretch out their right arm.

## No. 9. — PLATE XVI

Bas-relief with half-figures of four men, and traces of architectural background.

For the side wall of the *Cappella Borghese* in Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome.

Width  $17\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

## No. 10. — PLATE XVII

Half figure of a Triton holding a draped woman on his shoulders.

For a fountain. The head and arms of the woman are gone.

Height  $19\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

## No. 11. — PLATE XVIII

Front part of the head of a bearded man.

For the Saint Jerome in the *Cappella Chigi* in the Duomo of Siena.

Height  $13\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

No. 12. — PLATE XIX, *a*

Model (head missing) for the kneeling Angel on the left of the *Ciborio* in the *Cappella del Sacramento*, St. Peter's.

Height 11 inches.

No. 13. — PLATE XX, *a*

Another model for the same figure. Tip of right wing missing.  
Height  $11\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

No. 14. — PLATE XX, *b*

Angel on the right of the *Ciborio* in the *Cappella del Sacramento*.

Other models for these two Angels are mentioned by Frascchetti (p. 394), who also suggests that this angel on the right is not by Bernini, but "perhaps by Paolo Bernini, touched up by his father."

I do not feel tempted to agree with this idea of Signor Frascchetti; there is no doubt whatever that this model of the right-hand angel is by Gian Lorenzo himself. Height  $13\frac{1}{8}$  inches.

## No. 15. — PLATE XXI

Nude figure of an Angel holding the Crown of Thorns. The head and feet are gone. The weight rests on the right leg.

Sant' Andrea delle Fratte, Rome.

Height  $13\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

## No. 16. — PLATE XXII

Angel holding the Crown of Thorns.

This is the final model of the figure in Sant' Andrea delle Fratte.

The action of the legs is the reverse of that in 15. Height  $17\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

No. 17. — PLATE XXIII, *a*

Model for the Angel holding the Scroll. The tips of the wings are missing. In Sant' Andrea delle Fratte.

Height  $11\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

No. 18. — PLATE XIX, *b*

Another model for the same figure as No. 17; lacks the right leg, the head and most of the wings.

Height  $11\frac{1}{8}$  inches.

No. 19. — PLATE XXIV, *a*

Angel, perhaps for the ecstasy of Saint Theresa in *Santa Maria della Vittoria*, Rome. Right hand missing.

Height  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

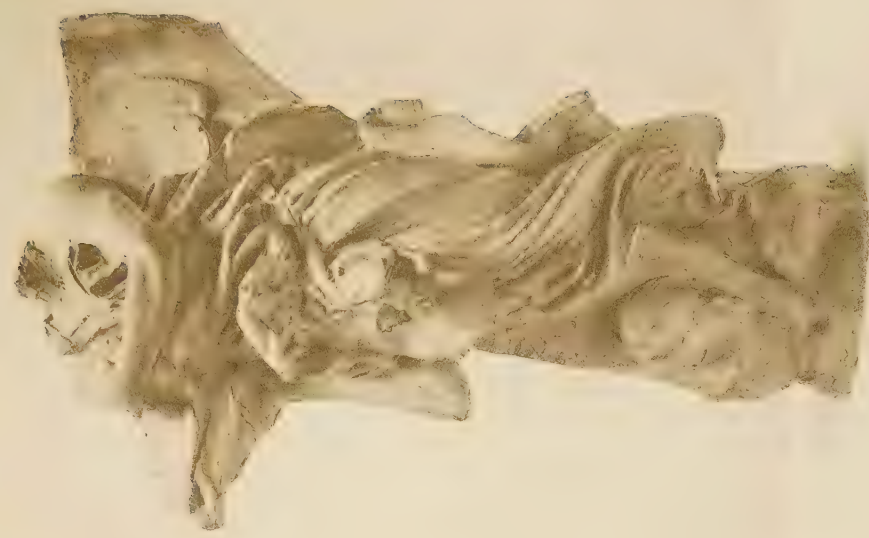
No. 20. — PLATE XXIII, *b*

Angel, draped, right leg bare, turning to the left. Part of right wing missing.

Height  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches.



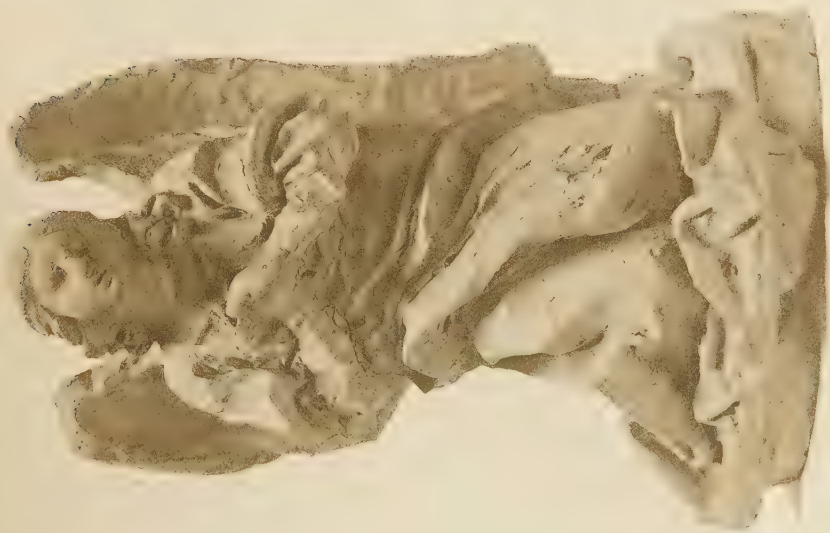
a



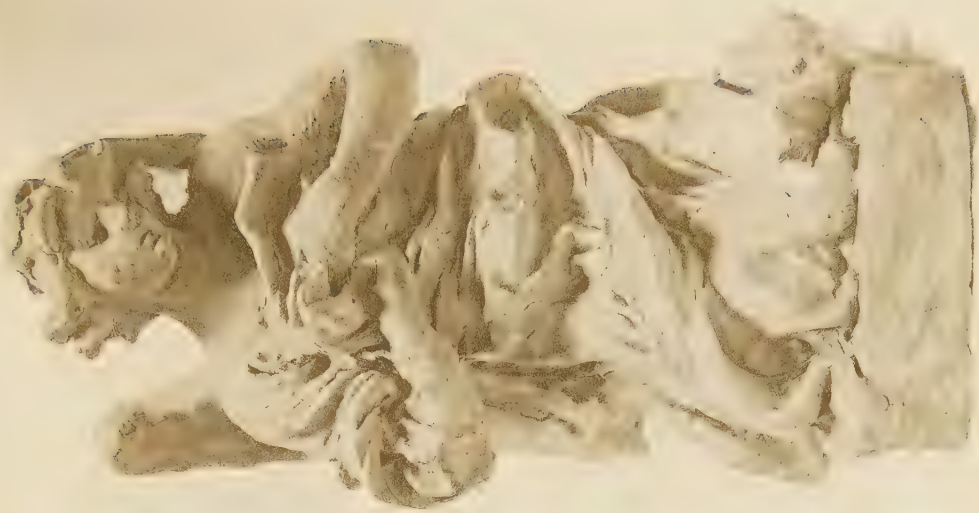
b







a



b





PLATE XXI.







PLATE XXII.





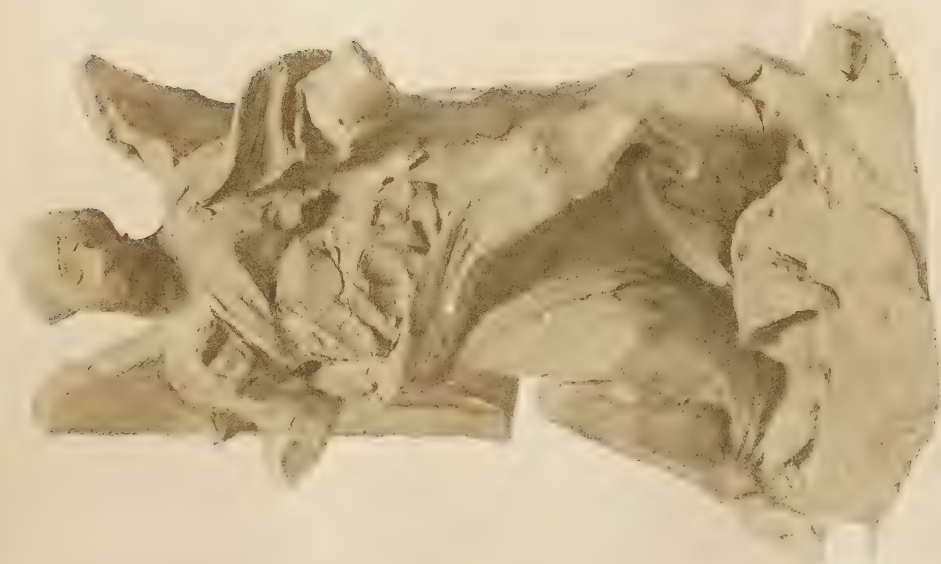
a



b



a



b









PLATE XXV.

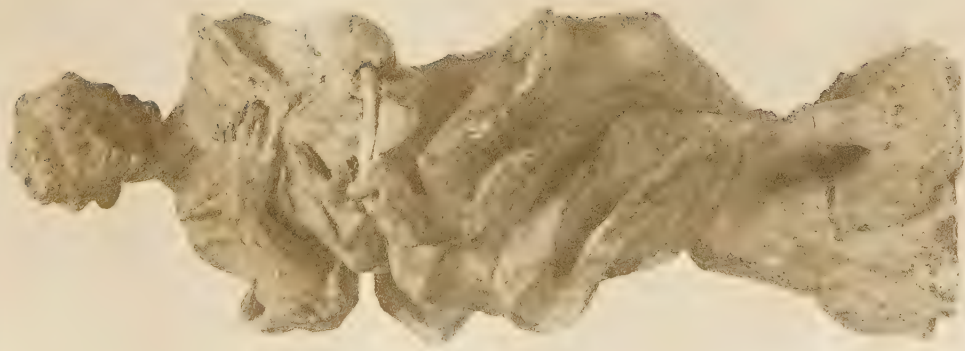




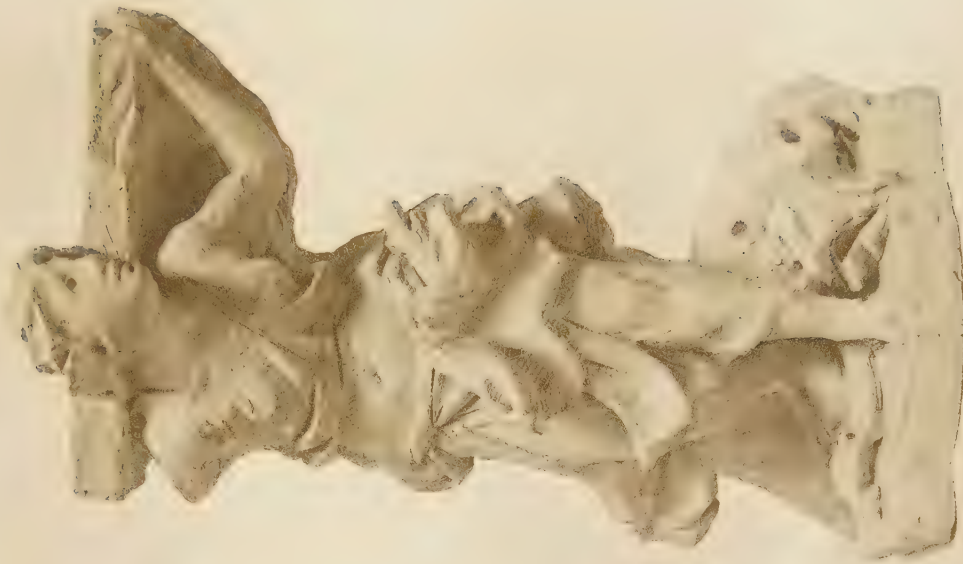
PLATE XXVI.







a



b



No. 21. — PLATE XXIV, *b*

Angel, draped, kneeling, head turned to right, right arm (hand missing) raised, left arm with open hand stretching downwards and outwards.

Height  $11\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

## No. 22. — PLATE XXV

Standing male figure, in high relief. Drapery hangs from the right shoulder, leaving torso bare but covering the legs with heavy folds. The left arm hangs down, and there was a palm branch in the now missing hand. The right arm is bent up with the hand over the chin. The head bends down and to the right. The figure rests its weight on the left leg.

The right side of the plaque is curved; the left side is straight, and on it is scratched a scale of measurements.

Height  $16\frac{5}{8}$  inches.

## No. 23. — PLATE XXVI

Oval bas-relief of the Virgin seated and looking down to right while holding the Child in her lap. High relief.

Very sketchy, but the most masterly of all these models.

Height 11 inches.

No. 24. — PLATE XXVII, *b*

Draped, standing female figure. She bends forward, turning to the left with arms (right arm missing) raised to support a slab that rests across her shoulders. The weight rests on the left leg. At her feet suggestion of a cuirass.

Study for the base of some monument such as the obelisk in the Piazza della Minerva. (Cf. Frascetti, pp. 300–303.)

Height  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

No. 25. — PLATE XXVII, *a*

Standing angel, heavily draped; the left knee is bent sharply backwards. The right arm is bent across the breast, the left arm (forearm missing) bent across the body lower down. The wings are missing.

Height  $8\frac{7}{8}$  inches.

## No. 26

The Magdalen kneeling, and grasping the foot of the Cross.

This figure is not by Bernini, and shows clearly the difference between the work of a master and that of an imitator.

Height 10 inches.

## No. 27

Study of a hand.

Length 8 inches.

### III. BERNINI'S DESIGNS FOR THE PIAZZA OF ST. PETER'S

THE pen and ink sketches by Bernini for the construction and adornment of the piazza in front of the Vatican, together with the surrounding buildings, deserve to be more widely known than they are at present.<sup>1</sup> Any details regarding the history and growth of this part of Rome are of the deepest interest to those who study the intellectual development of mankind. Did we possess any record of the reasons why Pericles and his advisers placed the temples and other buildings on the Acropolis of Athens just as they did, we should have a clearer understanding of the character and ideals of Athens than we now have. So a study of these drawings by Bernini will show very distinctly that the present form of the piazza is due to no mere thoughtless and haphazard erection of colonnades and fountains, but is the result of a deeply considered plan and illustrative of a very large idea.

The drawings are carefully done with pen and ink on fourteen sheets of paper which were numbered by some old-time owner. These sheets have had the edges trimmed. Ten are, with slight variations, 14 by  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches. The others are, as will be noted later, of different sizes. All, however, judging by the paper and method of drawing, belong unquestionably

<sup>1</sup> They were exhibited in Rome by the then owner Sig. Andrea Busiri-Vici at the Bernini Exposition in 1879 and are spoken of and reproduced in small form by Fraschetti in his book on Bernini.

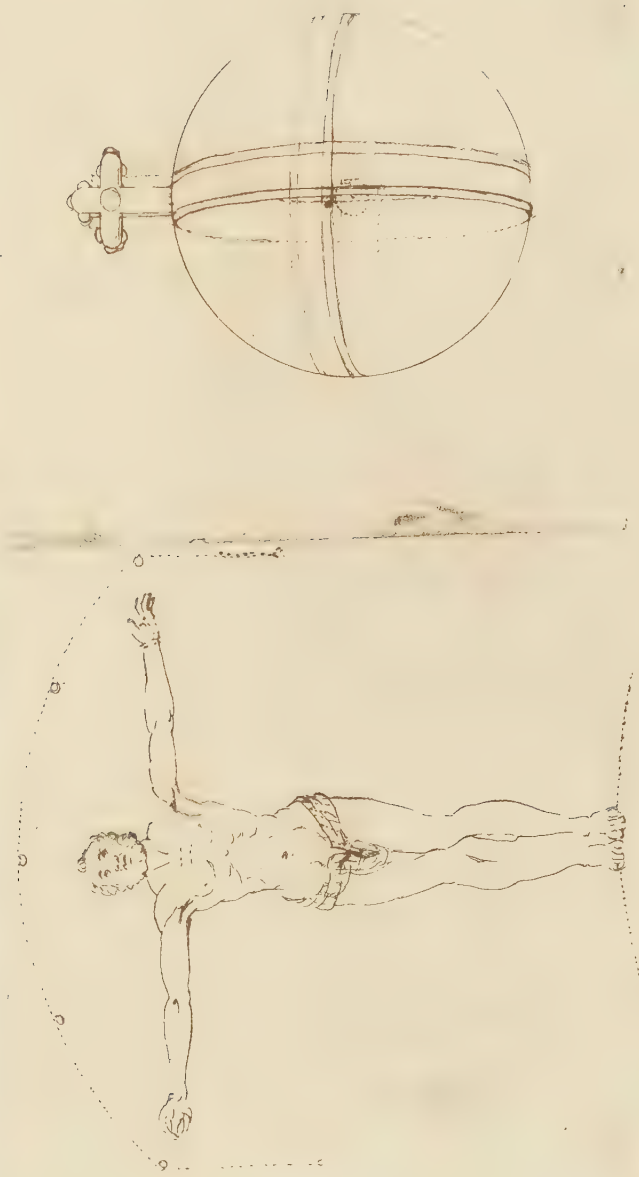


PLATE XXVIII.





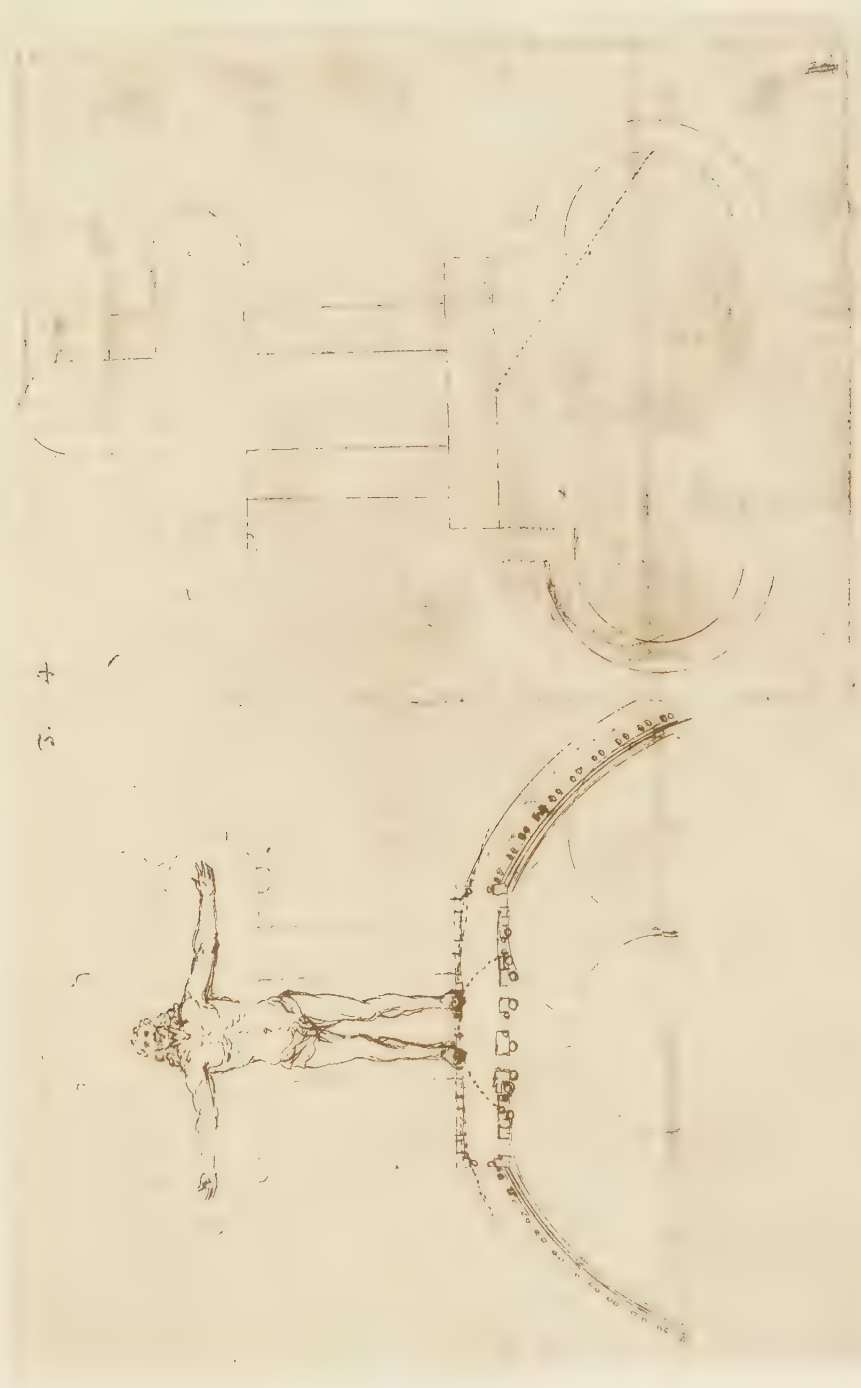






PLATE XXX.





to the same series. The drawings were mounted and bound together by the previous owner.

The history of the drawings can only be guessed at. In this connection the following facts are to be noted. Bernini was officially appointed architect of the *Fabbrica* of St. Peter's in 1680. After him Luigi Vanvitelli was head architect. With Vanvitelli there worked Andrea-Vici. In 1817 Vici left by his will to his friend the sculptor Canova drawings by Bernini representing the burial of the Countess Matilda, and Louis XIV on horseback. This legacy shows Vici to have owned original drawings by Bernini, and it is not improbable they had been given him by Vanvitelli. By the same will Vici left to his grandson Busiri his name and his studio, with all the original drawings by various masters therein contained. Consequently it is not a rash hypothesis that these drawings of the piazza came from Vanvitelli to Vici, and so to Busiri-Vici. Finally they were sold at auction in Rome in 1903. They are now in the Brandegee Collection.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

##### NO. 1. — PLATE XXVIII

This drawing shows the Orb; the Christian symbol of the world, surmounted by a cross.

The cross with the head and arms ending in curves like apses suggests the plan of a church, and the following drawings show clearly that the Orb and Cross were the fundamental idea in Bernini's mind when he planned the *piazza*.

##### NO. 2. — PLATE XXVIII

This is on a square piece of paper, similar in size to No. 1, and at present mounted on the same sheet at the left of No. 1. It shows the figure of a bearded man with arms outstretched as though on a cross. A curved dotted line stretches from hand to hand over the head and drops about an inch perpendicularly below each hand. This dotted line is a suggestion of the existing colonnades.

That the figure is thought of as being on a cross is borne out by sketches that follow and also by the dot in the palm of the left hand which possibly represents a nail.

The sharp, broken lines with which the figure is drawn are characteristic of Bernini.

#### NO. 3. — PLATE XXIX

An outline plan of the church with the colonnades in front. It is to be noted the latter start at the corners of the façade of the church and project a short distance parallel to the main axis before curving to each side.

Size  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

#### NO. 4. — PLATE XXIX

Similar to No. 3, but in greater detail. The figure of a bearded man represented within the plan of the church in the attitude of crucifixion. In the left arm of the colonnade is drawn the sun and in the right arm the moon and stars.

This is pasted in the book at the left of No. 3.

Size  $6\frac{7}{8} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

#### NO. 5. — PLATE XXX

This shows the same crucified figure as before. Over the head and below each hand is the dotted line seen in No. 2. Behind the head and arms is drawn with dots the elevation of St. Peter's, the Vatican and the colonnades.

#### NO. 6. — PLATE XXX

Similar figure to the preceding, but with the arms contorted so as to follow the straight portion of the colonnade (shown in No. 3) before following the curve. Behind the head the dotted outline of St. Peter's and behind the figure's left arm the colonnade and Vatican buildings laid in with dots and a few lines.

No. 5 is at the right of No. 6, and the size of the sheet is  $14 \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

It should be noted that the figure is so placed in these two drawings that the dome of the church suggests a bishop's mitre.

#### NO. 7. — PLATE XXXI

Outline elevation of the north half of the façade of St. Peter's and the north colonnade, rising behind which is shown the Vatican Palace.

On the left half of the sheet are faint pencil lines showing the south side of the colonnade and façade.

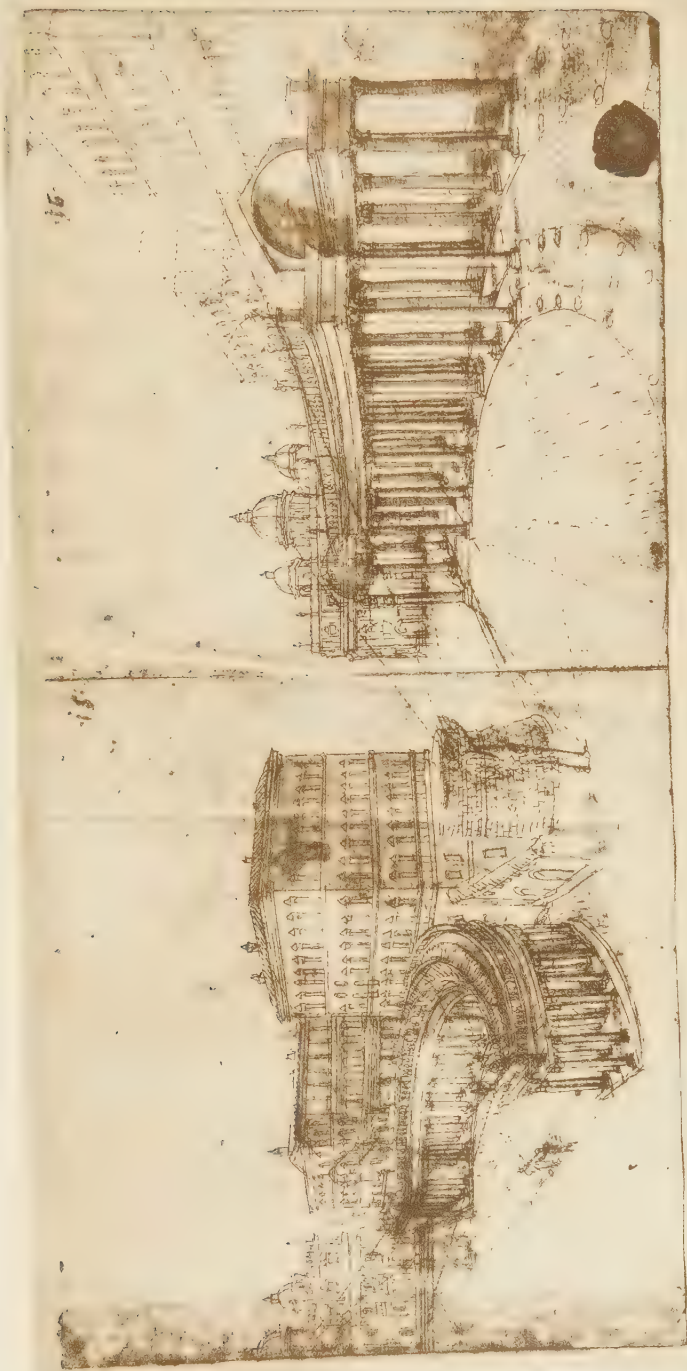
The sky is touched in with bluish white.

Size  $14\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  inches.



PLATE XXXI.





8.





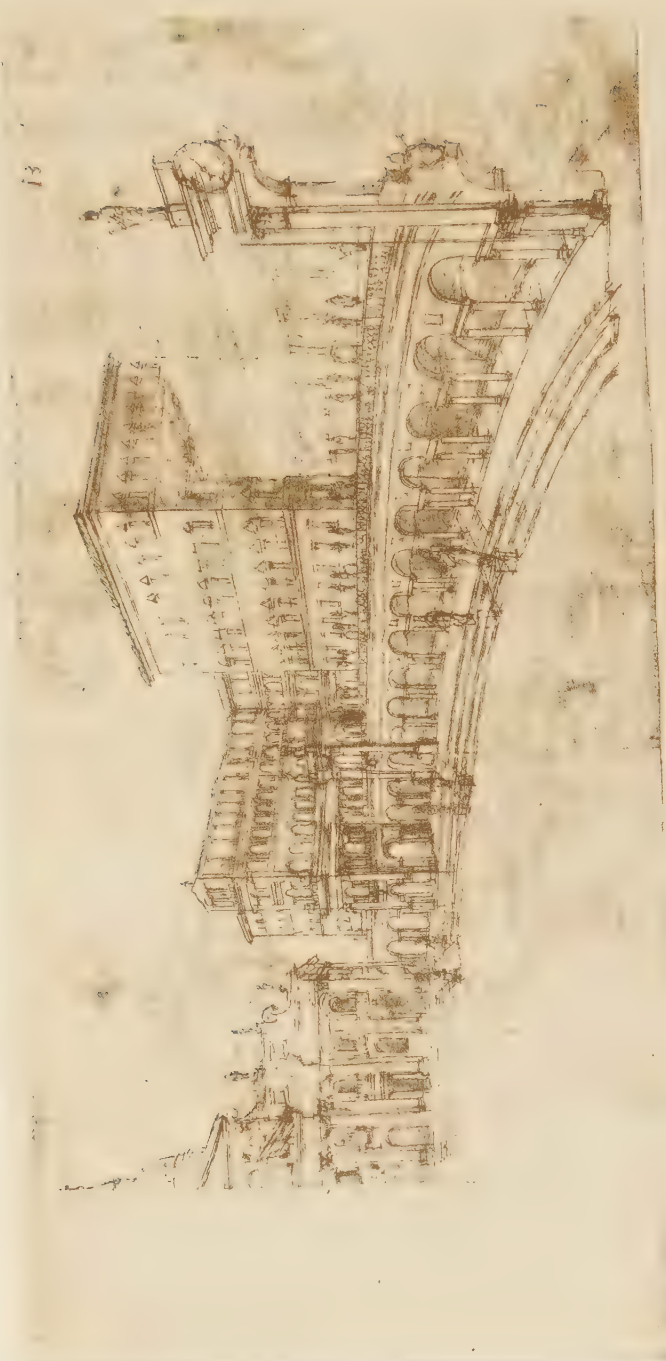
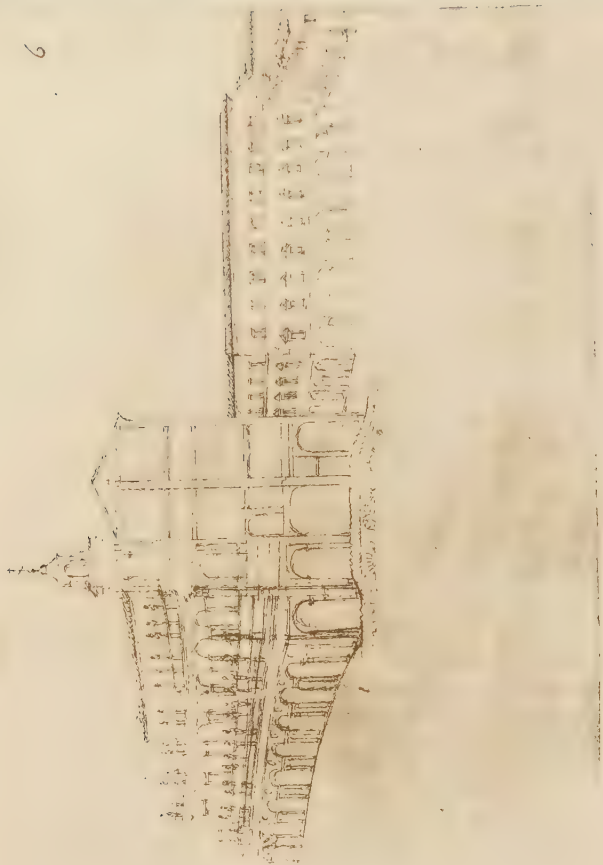


PLATE XXXIII.





6

PLATE XXXIV.



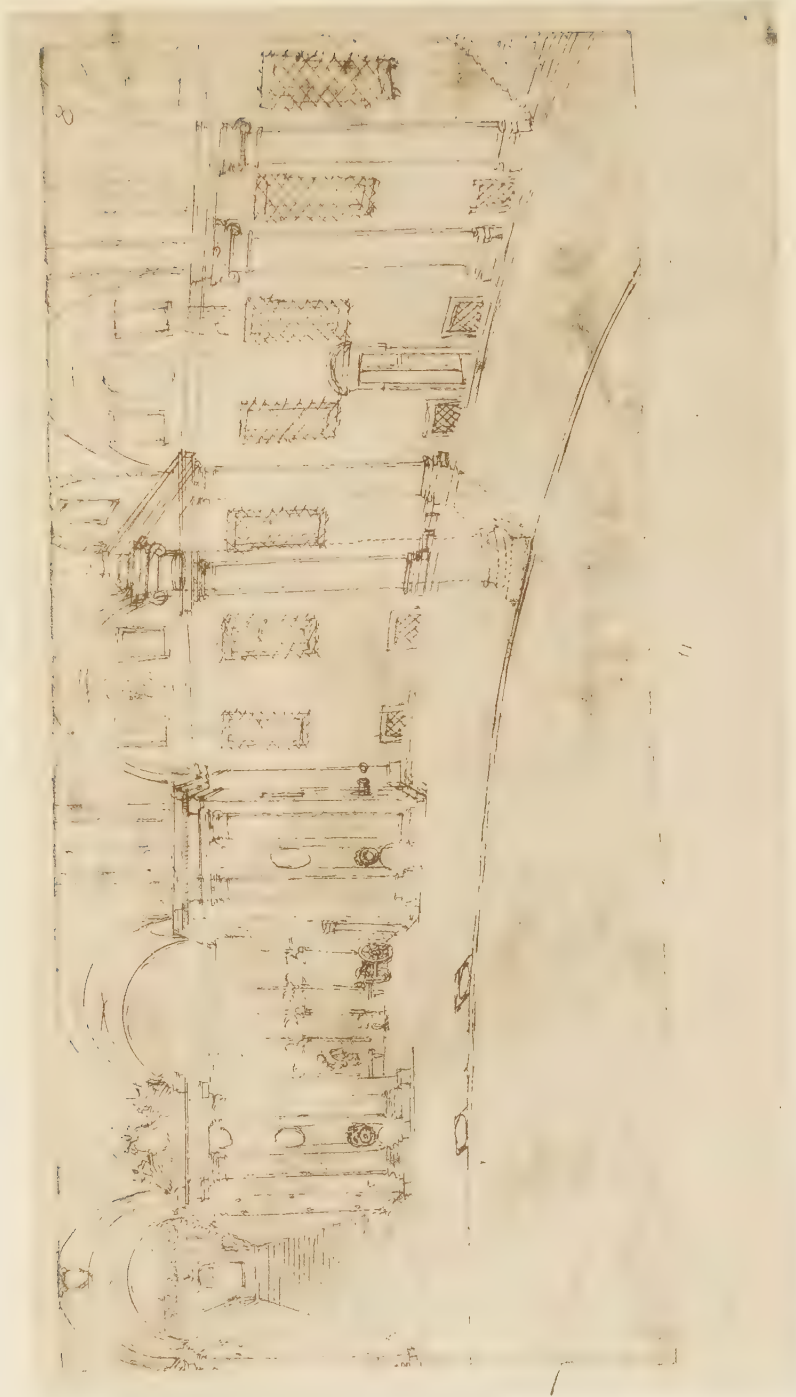


PLATE XXXV.





## No. 8. — PLATE XXXII

Two drawings of the north colonnade. These are similar to the preceding, but more elaborate (with shadows washed in in gray), as shown by dotted lines drawn to the eyes of outlined figures from various points.

We find here the architect's intention regarding the view from different positions.

Size  $14\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

On the back of the sheet is a sketch of the door of St. Peter's with the balcony where the Pope used to appear. I do not feel sure that this is by Bernini. There is also another sheet with a more detailed drawing of this door.

## No. 9. — PLATE XXXIII

Similar to No. 8, but still more elaborate and larger; there is only one drawing on the sheet.

In this design Bernini has altered the line of the colonnade. Instead of having, as in the preceding drawing, a straight portion projecting from the church, he has here drawn the colonnade in one large curve from the church outwards, putting an elaborate entrance to the Vatican Palace near the church. This entrance would have led to the Cortile di San Damaso.

Size  $14 \times 6\frac{5}{8}$  inches.

## No. 10. — PLATE XXXIV

Slight outline sketch of the outer end of the north arm of the colonnade, which is here made two-storied.

Size  $13\frac{7}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{8}$  inches.

## No. 11. — PLATE XXXV

Interior of inner end of north arm of colonnade, showing the stairway as it exists at present. Size  $14\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{3}{8}$  inches.

## No. 12. — PLATE XXXVI

Two sketches; one showing the plan, the other the elevation, of the Cortile di San Damaso.

Size  $13\frac{7}{8} \times 6\frac{5}{8}$  inches.

## No. 13. — PLATE XXXVII

View of the façade of St. Peter's with both colonnades, which are two-storied. The sky is touched in with bluish white.

The buildings of the Vatican are also shown, — those on the right exist, those on the left are imaginary.

Size  $14\frac{5}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

## No. 14. — PLATE XXXVIII

View looking east from the front of St. Peter's.

On each side are the ends of the colonnades; they are in two stories, that on the right crowned with low clock-towers similar to the "asses' ears" once placed by Bernini on the Pantheon.

Beyond the piazza is the *Borgo* much reconstructed and made symmetrical. In the distance the Castel Sant' Angelo.

Size  $14\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{5}{8}$  inches.

## No. 15. — PLATE XXXIX

Two sketches in pen, washed with sepia, of the *Borgo*, looking towards St. Peter's.

These show different methods of treating the north arm of the colonnade. The one on the right shows the colonnade closing the view up the *Borgo*, the other shows an opening carrying the eye beyond and between St. Peter's and the Vatican.

Size  $14\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

The buildings shown exist in much the same form to-day. Even the fountain still serves.

## No. 16. — PLATE XL

Plan of the piazza showing how it was intended to symbolize the orb of the world suggested on No. 1.

In this sketch we see the circle within which is a dotted square. Within the square is a figure with arms and legs outstretched along the diagonals. At the top is written over a faint pencil outline of the church (perhaps not original) *San Pietro*. At the bottom is written twice *Piazza Rusticucci* and on a piece of paper pasted on is the plan of a building shown in No. 14, — one of the buildings intended for the reconstructed *Borgo*.

On the right and left of the figure are indicated the *Porta Angelica* and the *Porta Cavalleggieri*.

The dotted square within the circle is divided into quarters in which is written *Asia*, *Europa*, *America*, *Affrica*.

Size  $7\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$  inches.

These are the plans showing Bernini's ideas regarding the Piazza of St. Peter's. From a study of them we see how the circular piazza itself was intended to represent the world at large, while the colonnade symbolized the arms of the Cross. Crowning all was the great Church, founded by Him whose arms could embrace the whole earth, and from whose doors should stream to every quarter the promise of hope and love for which He died.

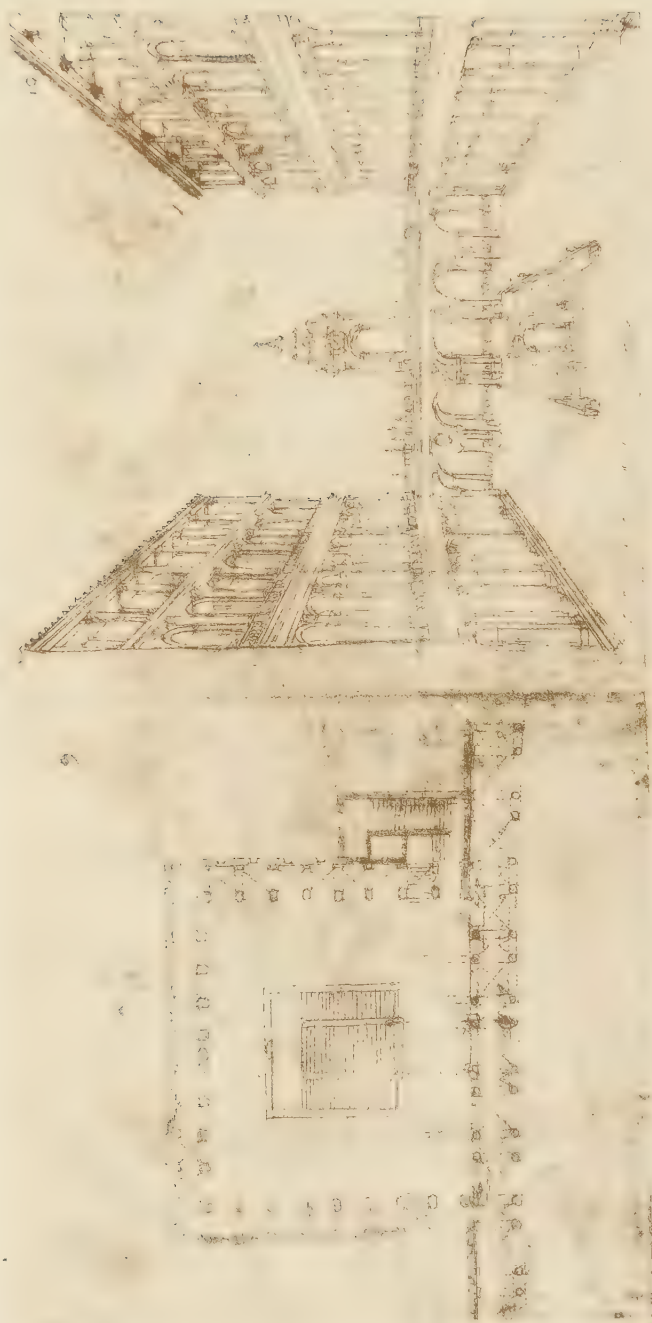






PLATE XXXVII.







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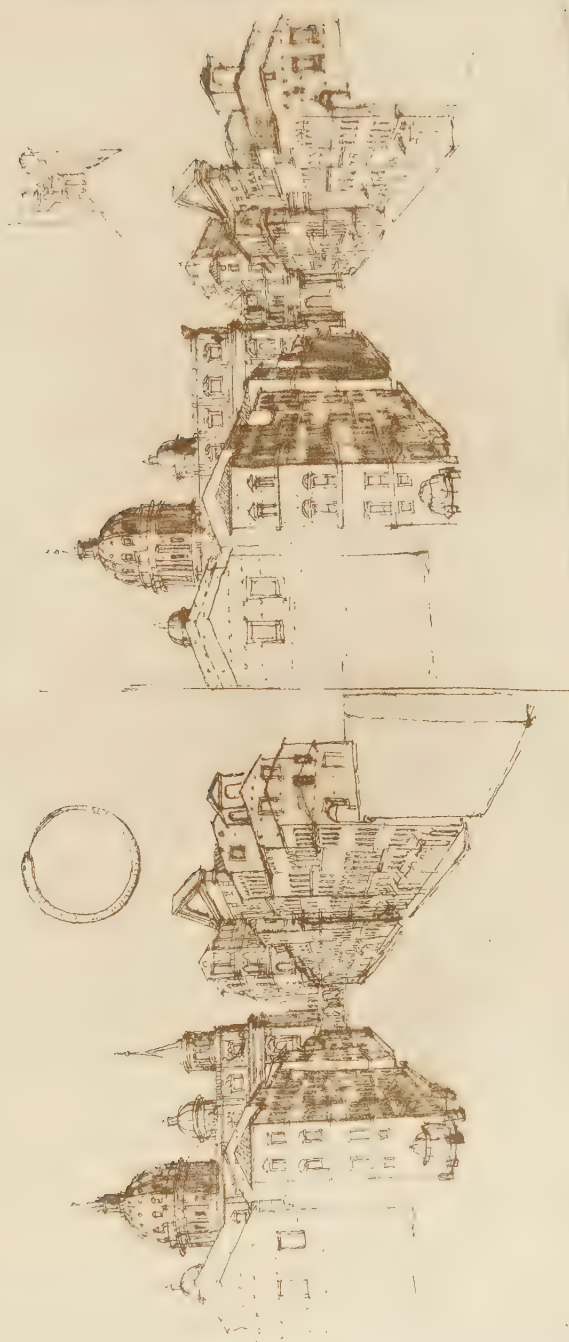
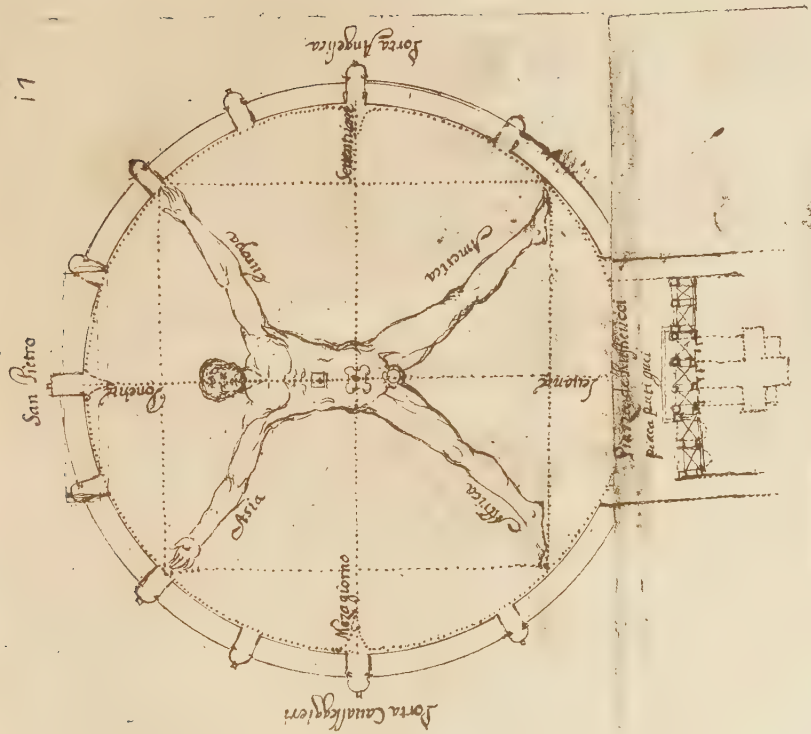


PLATE XXXIX.









# ASPECTS OF THE ART OF SCULPTURE



## I. THE ART OF PORTRAITURE

ALL students have noticed the similarity in style between certain Egyptian portraits and other works by ancient Roman as well as Florentine artists, and the resemblance in style that exists between Greek and Venetian portraits. Also there is a marked dissimilarity between the Egyptian-Roman-Florentine Group on the one hand and the Greek-Venetian Group on the other; and these two facts suggest the conclusion that the art of portraiture consists in something more than the mere photographic imitation in stone, or with paint, of the human face or figure. Were such imitation the essential factor in the art the only differences in portraits of different epochs would be those of ethnographic character. The special characteristics of portraiture as of the other arts at any given period are the result of the intellectual and material condition of the people to whom the artist belongs. Style, that is the distinguishing quality of the work of art, the quality which differentiates it from a work of another period or race, is the result, largely unconscious, of the relation of the artist to life and its effect upon him. The material, the means by which he gives expression to his endeavour at creation or representation, is of minor importance.

The Sheik-el-Beled (Plates XLI, XLII) and the bust of Scipio so called (Plate XLIII) might almost be portraits of brothers; and the family is increased by a little Egyptian head

in the museum in Venice, and by some of the men immortalised by Donatello. So too Pericles as we see him in the bust by Kresilas seems separated by but a narrow margin from Gorgione's Knight of Malta. And yet in blood, traditions, circumstances and hopes these men were the poles asunder.

How then is this likeness of certain portraits to one another to be explained unless by the existence of some connection dependent on the temper of the artist?

There is still another curious likeness and another difference to be noted among the carved and painted portraits of various epochs and schools. While the head of Corbulo is unlike that of Pericles in the æsthetic impression it gives, and that of Angelo Doni by Raphael also is æsthetically unlike the Duke of Norfolk by Titian, still the carved heads have a common bond as have also the painted ones.<sup>1</sup> They do not make the two broad groups into which I have, for the sake of making plain a general idea, divided portraits æsthetically similar, but they make plain when understood that painted portraits are necessarily different from carved ones — different in more than the mere fact that one is round and the other flat. The difference springs deep down from what is possible to attain by either art. The sculptor of the Pericles and the painter of the Norfolk both set before us the grave, elegant and stately face of a bearded man in middle life. Neither artist distracts our attention by bravura or technique or by realistic emphasis of detail. Though stylistically similar, these works still do not impress our minds in the same way. The following pages will be clearer if I say at once that this differing

<sup>1</sup> And these bonds are dependent, I believe, on fundamental laws of sculpture and painting.



PLATE XLI.





mental impression arises because in busts our attention is drawn chiefly to the mouth while in painted portraits it is turned on the eyes. This is due to the special laws of the technique by which the works are produced ; given a painter and sculptor with the same point of view and the same mental tendencies, the portraits produced by them, even of the same person, though evidently expressing the same intellectual qualities both of artist and of sitter, are in modes of expression and certain external aspects necessarily unlike. In pursuing this investigation and in discussing the existence and nature of the various laws the governance of which I have suggested, the history of the rise and spread of portraiture must be kept in mind.

Before the intention of the maker of portraits can be comprehended the motives that lead to the desire of the public or of private individuals to possess such work must be understood. In the main they are two,—one religious and one historic ; to these may be added a third, that of sentiment and friendship. The religious cause is best illustrated by Egyptian statues, of which a large proportion were made to be placed in tombs. These are the earliest portraits of western origin which exist in sufficient numbers to afford a sound basis of criticism. The well-known dependence, in that country, of these works on religious prescriptions needs hardly more than passing mention. That the soul of dead mortals might, returning to this earth and to the tomb, find its accustomed corporeal dwelling place, portrait statues of the deceased were placed in the sepulchral chamber.

Holding this belief, it was only natural that the sculptors often made statues life-size, and as closely resembling

the dead original as possible, in order that the soul might find a shelter exactly similar to its original living one. Had they not been so made, the soul would have been troubled in its search. Work such as this was of course expensive and the mass of the people had to content themselves with smaller and less elaborate figures or with mere glazed figurines. But the more rare elaborate works show the ideal and serve as a sure guide in studying the conceptions and hopes of this or any people — just as the gold treasure from Mycenæ is of much greater value than all the terra-cotta vases in showing the life and thoughts of the time.

Other portraits of Pharaohs and their queens, of priests and generals, were carved on temple walls or set up to commemorate striking events, and these also were made realistic because of the egotistic idea that called them into being. Unless the person portrayed was carved realistically the commemorative value of the monument was lessened. These religious and commemorative ideas influenced the sculptors in their choice of material. Both the desire to make an enduring image of the dead for the sake of the soul that might return and the wish to make the memory of the person as enduring as possible led the sculptors to make use of the hardest stones; stones such as do not lend themselves to sculpture and such as are never used where the art develops in accordance with cultivated taste rather than special demand.<sup>1</sup> But though exactness of likeness was tirelessly sought for by the

<sup>1</sup> It is true that wood was sometimes made use of, but for serious work only in the early times before the art had been developed. Nor can it be supposed that the lack of marble in Egypt was the effective cause that led to the use of granites and basalts. The Egyptians were energetic traders and might have obtained marble had they desired it, but the fact is they preferred the harder sorts of stone, though alabaster was sometimes used.

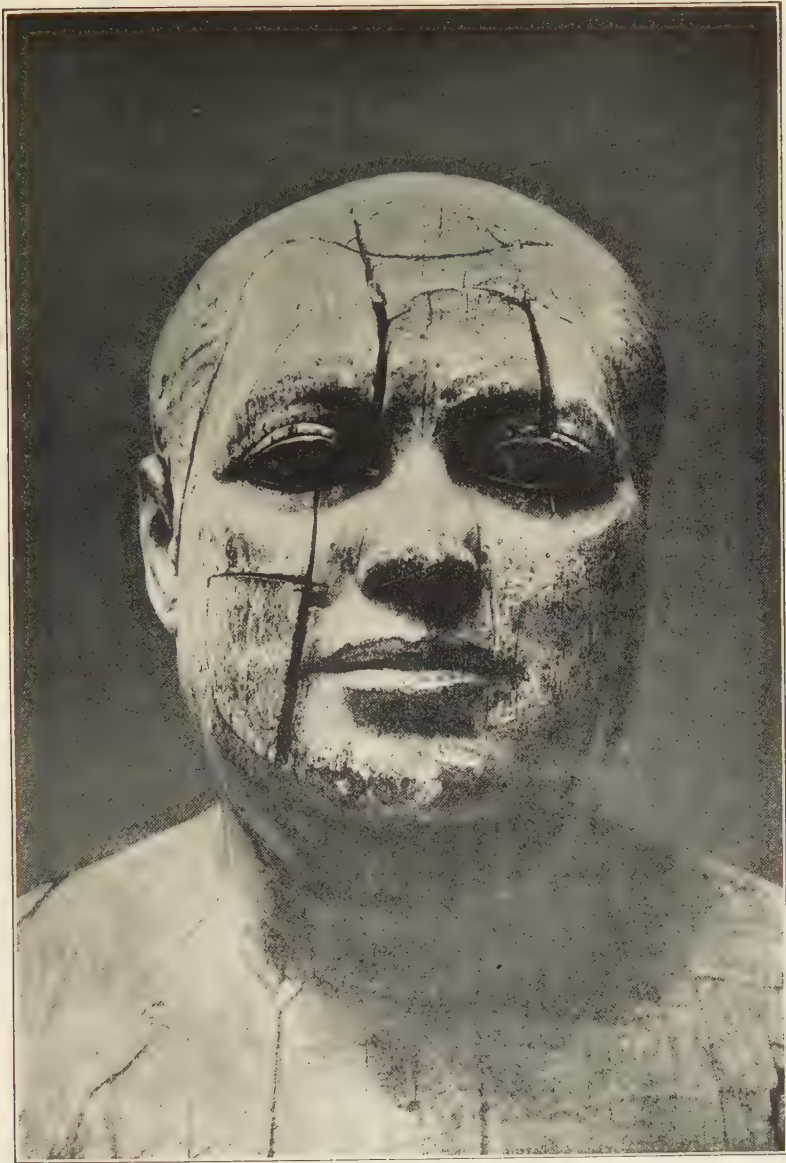


PLATE XLII.



Egyptians (I refer of course to the earlier epochs before the influx of Greek or Roman ideas), it was not attained with the same success as in later days by the Romans and Florentines.

This failure was in part due to the use of unyielding material, such as granite and basalt. Successful representation, in such stone, of the finer details of facial form, was practically impossible, and furthermore, owing to the dark and variegated colour of these stones, would have been scarcely noticeable could it have been attained. Hence the sculptors were led to practise a certain broadness of treatment that makes their work seem, to careless observation, like the Greek; but though one of the chief charms of Greek work is broadness, it is the outcome of very different causes and, if carefully studied, is seen to produce a very different effect from that of Egyptian work.<sup>1</sup>

Any phenomenon is due to mixed causes, and it must not be supposed that the use of hard materials alone led to breadth of treatment. The conventional position of the figures in Egyptian art (due in large measure to various non-æsthetic causes) was suited better by a broad and conventionalised treatment of the face than by more particular niceness in the rendering of its detail.<sup>2</sup> Religious feeling led to the placing of quietly posed statues in the tombs, and as regards

<sup>1</sup> That there may be no misunderstanding of the terms employed, I will say that by breadth of treatment I mean that the sculptor or painter leaves the various surfaces of the object reproduced by him in large measure unbroken by small lights and shades which, however true to nature, are apt in art to distract the attention from the general effect. Though small differences are disregarded there may be, as Greek work shows, exquisite modulation of surface.

<sup>2</sup> I refer of course to statues in the round. The bas-reliefs show much free action due partly to the technique, partly to their being in softer stone and partly to the fact that the figures in them are illustrations to historic chronicles and not primarily portraits. So too figures and groups in wood, faience or metal are freer.



the figures of the great rulers whose word was law, attitudes expressive of the calm that results from absolute power were best fitted to express the current beliefs. These attitudes were also restrained in consequence of the refractory nature of the stones used.

It is interesting to consider what would have been the development of sculpture in Egypt had the art been freed from the necessity of conforming to the demands of religion and contemporary history. One searches in vain among the masses of Egyptian sculpture for the expression of the individual sculptor's emotions. We do not even know the names of the sculptors. They were not noted by their contemporaries nor did interest in their work lead them to sign it. Sculpture in that antique land was not a fine art in the sense of being chosen by men of special tastes and feeling to express the enjoyment felt by them in certain forms. It was a highly developed handicraft, a technique pursued by rule. As illustrative of the character, the life and the thought of the people portrayed it is allied to Roman work rather than to Greek.

Religion is seen to influence portraiture in another way. Many pictures, the subjects of which are religious, by Botticelli, Ghirlandaio and others, are filled with portraits, but these are essential to the composition, and are thought of as figures first, as portraits afterwards. But there are many sacred pictures of the Renaissance in which, with varying degrees of simplicity and frankness, a portrait of the donor of the painting is inserted not as an essential part of the composition but because of the desire of the donor to secure lasting recognition of the fact that he had fulfilled his religious vows and duties. It was an accepted proof of respectability in this



world and might possibly help in the next. Neither in Egypt nor in this class of pictures of the Renaissance are the works thought of primarily from the point of view of being artistic reproductions of the human face, but they are means to an end. They are in fact symbols. Work of this sort is so rare in Greek or Roman art that it may be considered as practically non-existent.<sup>1</sup>

The personal portrait, the portrait made for the sake of gratifying the self-esteem of the person represented, is well exhibited in Egyptian work in the bas-reliefs illustrating the conquests of the Pharaohs and in the colossal statues erected in a spirit of pride and self-glorification such as was exhibited again by the Romans. Such portraits as these are a certain indication of the all but universal desire for glory and fame. They are an expression of the same confident spirit that leads the owners of great buildings to carve their names over the entrance and are produced in large numbers only during periods when individuals seek eagerly for personal recognition.

Such periods occur when large stores of money are possessed by private persons; then religious beliefs grow faint, in men's if not in women's<sup>2</sup> minds, and the quiet and enduring appreciation of a few objects gives way to the excited pursuit of constant novelty in enjoyment. Consequently instead of being content with philosophic moderation men attribute an untrue value to mere possession, and, since money can buy many

<sup>1</sup> The bas-relief of the potter in the Acropolis Museum in Athens belongs to this class.

<sup>2</sup> Though no woman has ever reached the highest rank in any art, her influence has been enormous. It is a subject to be studied by itself, but it must be constantly kept in mind that no people who have regarded woman from any but the highest point of view has ever produced the noblest art. It may be a fallacy to regard her so, but it is the most powerful and helpful ideal the western mind has yet conceived.

material things, come to the false conclusion that he who has the most is to be ranked among the world's greatest sons.

But the qualities needful for amassing riches are by no means rare and in the main are correlated with lack of interest in the Past and with undeveloped imagination. Hence ignorant of, or at least not sympathetic with, the more subtle but more effective types of men who work not with money but with personal character, the wealthy naturally come to think of themselves as individually interesting and important, and in consequence their portraits are made in every shape and size. Such works cannot, as regards the person portrayed, be of much interest, and are usually ugly, because the lives and occupations of people invariably affect the forms and expressions of their faces. The exceptions to this rule are the portraits of such men as Lorenzo dei Medici, or others of our own day who use their inherited or acquired wealth in the patronage of the arts and sciences — who use their powers indirectly for the cultivation of ideals.

Such portraits as these are of varying character. They may be public, put up, that is, by a grateful and flattering people to commemorate a ruler or chief citizen, as in the case of Gattamalata in Padua and Colleone in Venice; or they may be of purely private interest and intended only for the eyes of the successive generations of the family to which the person depicted belongs. But public or private, in the one case as in the other, the desire for them being due to personal regard and love of fame, an accuracy in the reproduction of feature is sought that distinguishes them clearly from portraits made with other less worldly motives.

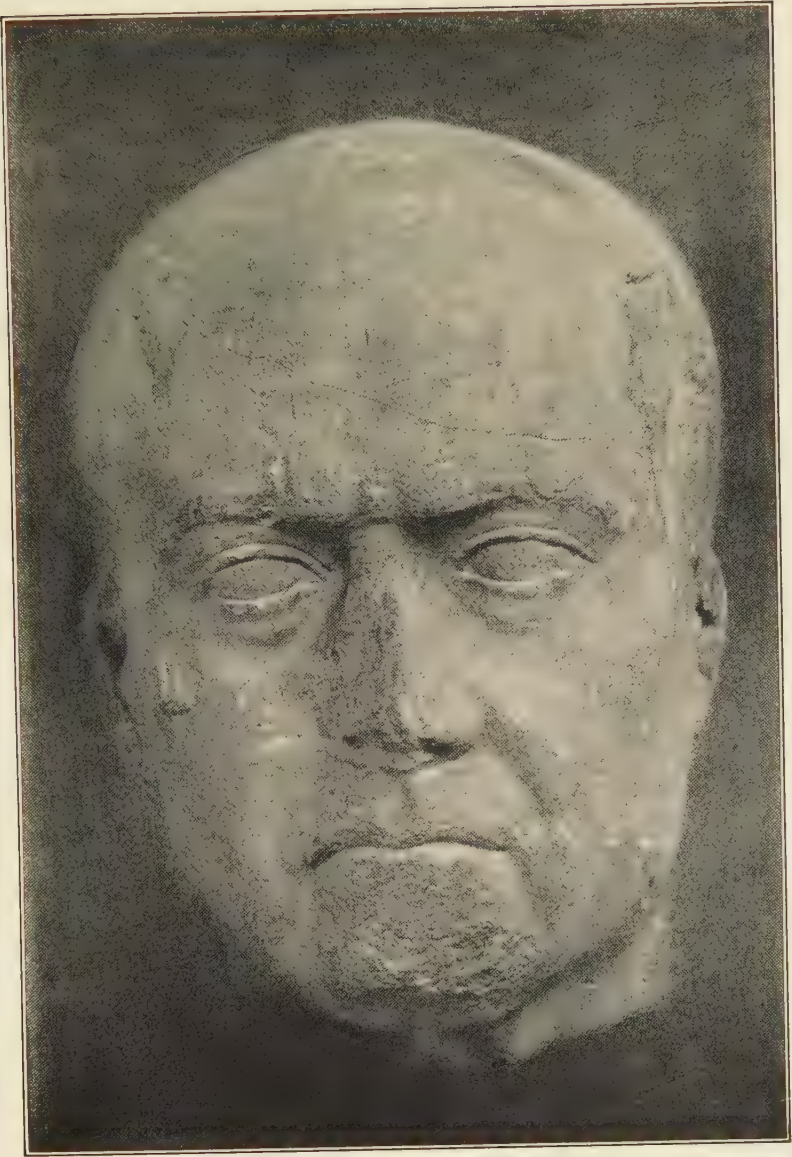


PLATE XLIII.



It is known of course that this desire for fame stirred the hearts of oriental potentates long centuries before the beginning of connected history. But in that classic part of the ancient world with which we are intimately related, it does not become specially noticeable till the time of Alexander. It was an active factor in life during the existence of the Roman world, and again in the Renaissance. One of the phenomena most indicative of this aspiration is the character of the monuments placed on graves, and particularly the inscriptions on such stones. On the Greek grave stones we find often enough the name of the deceased but rarely if ever any intimate notice of his life. On Roman and Renaissance monuments, on the other hand, the length of life, and the honorific offices held, are all given with wearisomely full detail.

Portraits made for friendship's sake are uncommon and do not, I believe, occur before the time of the Renaissance. Then one hears of friends sending their portraits to one another. In Rome a somewhat similar custom was practised to a certain extent, as is shown by the portraits on rings and cameos. Such work, meant as it was for personal adornment, must have been, at least in part, inspired by the tender regard of friend for friend. But it seems not to have been a common custom in the ancient world; just why it would be hard to tell, for no more inviolable friendships have ever been known than those told of in ancient history and drama, nor more tender feeling than is expressed in many of the inscriptions on ancient tombstones. Perhaps it was that the house architecture of those days was but little adapted to the displaying of such objects, and the collection by private individuals of things was but little practised except in Rome, and



even there collectors were comparatively few. However this may be, the fact remains that the portraits of the ancient world were in the main religious or commemorative, and the idea of friendship being maintained or strengthened by the possession of the dumb semblance of absent dear ones seems to have grown and spread with the Christian religion.

At first sight it appears as if there were three ways of making portraits — the sculptor's, the painter's, and the writer's. It is not however in any true sense a portrait that a writer sets before us. This is beyond his power to accomplish. He is unable, that is, to give various readers such impression of the look and carriage of the person described that they can inevitably recognise him in the passing crowd. Continuous and sequent events may be described by words, but they cannot show instantaneously isolated images. Masters of style can call up visions to the mind by well-selected epithets, but such visions are typical rather than actual; and they are of scenes of considerable scope, or of actions of dramatic quality, rather than accurate images of facial form and expression such as, in the only true sense of the word, can be called portraits.

So far as art in the sense of reproduction is concerned, it is evident that language can be used for description, for suggestions of moods and general conditions, but not for showing in a sharp and quickly defined manner a given scene or object at a given moment. When Shelley speaks of

The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;  
The vultures to the conqueror's banner true  
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,  
And whose wings rain contagion, —





PLATE XLIV.



he calls to mind most vividly conditions consequent on war, but before no two readers of the lines will the same visions rise. To see such horrors as Shelley writes of, presented so that all beholders will regard them in the same way, we must turn to such a work as Turner's *Rizpah*.<sup>1</sup>

The Greeks, it is interesting to note in this connection, recognised this limitation of the power of words and rarely tried to delineate the actors in their poetry and drama by other means than the description of traits of character. It may be said that the Greeks also did not attempt landscape in their writing. True, but we have every reason to know that the Greek mind was not interested seriously in beauties of landscape, while we know that it was deeply concerned with the characters and actions of individuals. Landscape was not studied by the Greeks as an end in itself, whereas portraiture was. Hence the absence of an attempt at portraiture in their literature by other means than description of character is the natural result of their mental tendencies. Such description can of course be accomplished by language with greater certainty than by sculpture or painting. It can give such an impression of the nature of a person that there is no more room for doubt concerning the qualities that constitute that nature than there is concerning the colour of eyes that have been put on canvas by some painter. Take any example and it will appear that when an author tries to stir the imagination to form an image of a character, he does it mainly by describing carefully his nature rather than his personal ap-

<sup>1</sup> When kept to its true course, the magnificent effects attained by language in perpetuating landscape are splendidly seen in Ruskin, when, for example, he describes the Roman Campagna (Preface to 2d ed., *Modern Painters*) or Verona (*Joy Forever*, sec. 76 ff.).

pearance, and when he attempts to do more than this, he suggests inevitably a different vision to every reader. Shakespeare's sonnets are sufficient evidence of the truth of these statements.

I should not wish to imply that writers, even the greatest of them, do not sometimes attempt to depict persons by elaborate descriptions, but a comparison of any two illustrated editions of an author will show my contention to be correct. The inefficiency of the means and the inadequacy of the result has been recognised by the masters of literature. And it needs but to compare a word portrait with a painted one of the same person to be convinced of the painter's greater power in this work. Take Shelley's lines describing the crazed musician :

There the poor wretch was sitting mournfully  
Near a piano, his pale fingers twined  
One with the other, and the ooze and wind  
Rushed through an open casement, and did sway  
His hair, and starred it with the brackish spray ;  
His head was leaning on a music book,  
And he was muttering, and his lean limbs shook ;  
His lips were pressed against a folded leaf  
In hue too beautiful for health, and grief  
Smiled in their motions as they lay apart —  
As one who wrought from his own fervid heart  
The eloquence of passion, soon he raised  
His sad meek face and eyes lustrous and glazed  
And spoke — sometimes as one who wrote and thought  
His words might move some heart that heeded not  
If sent to distant lands. —

As a portrait the failure of these verses lies in the fact that the attention of the reader is hurried on from point to point like a storm-driven bird and never allowed to rest. Look, for half the time it takes to read the lines, at Titian's Concert, and you have a much more definite image of a musician. It is

just because of this unrest of the attention, due to continued introduction of some new feature of importance, that poets and writers of prose are much more successful when they endeavour to reproduce a landscape, for it is a natural tendency, as we look at any scene of nature, for the eyes to wander over the hills and far away. They cannot seize the essential points instantaneously and they cannot apprehend the interrelation of the details as when they look at a person's face and figure.

Sometimes the poet — it is generally a poet, for the epithets that poets use are apt to be more carefully chosen and so have greater graphic force than those of prose writers — seems to succeed in portraiture, but if you will consider closely, it will be seen that the success is fictitious. It is due to our having a ready-formed picture of the character of the person described which is suited by the poet's words, as in Browning's lines :

You know we French stormed Ratisbon,  
     A mile or so away  
 On a little mound Napoleon stood  
     On our storming day  
 With neck outthrust, you fancy how,  
     Legs wide, arms locked behind,  
 As if to balance the prone brow  
     Oppressive with its mind.

But to one who had never seen a picture of Napoleon what image would these lines give? Or, take Lowell's lines on Lincoln. Not a word in them concerning the outward appearance of the Martyr Chief; but the attempt, successful to the uttermost, is made to impress on the reader's mind what there was of him to think of, not to look at :

Wise, steadfast in the strength of God and true.



These epithets offer no suggestion that can be visualised, nor is there when we note

. . . that sure mind's unfaltering skill  
And supple tempered will  
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.

And then finally, to sum up:

Here was a type of the true elder race,  
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.

Vivid and eloquent as all this is, it offers no picture of the tall, gaunt President. It is but a suggestion of mental conditions. It does not show the deep-set eyes, sorrowful with the sorrows of two races, or the firm mouth lined with the humour that helped him to bear his burden of care. Plutarch himself does not show us Cæsar, or Pericles, or Demosthenes or any other worthy, as the sculptors do.

Possibly it might be suggested that in such poems as those quoted the writer had no intention of giving a suggestion of the outer husk that hides the inner man; but there is one class of poems — the love lyrics — in which the passion-driven bard would surely, could it be accomplished, give the immortality of portraiture to the beloved. But those "dear dead women," the ever-renewing Spring brood of Sappho, Chloris, Lesbia, Lalage and Doris, are but the vague dwellers of dreamland. Sometimes they are dark and sometimes fair; they have cheeks that shame the rose, and eyes whose glance overwhelms as does the bolt of Jove; their brows are white as driven snow, and a nest for little loves is in their bosom — but can we ever be sure that we recognise from such description each particular Lesbia as, waiting and watching at the corner, we hopefully murmur "She comes, she's here, she's past"? Such



words as these form a portrait only for that one love-stung heart that beats the overtone to the note of Lesbia's footfall.

No, the writer cannot, in any adequate sense, place before us portraits.

Literature being excluded as a means of portraiture, it remains to consider sculpture and painting. In order to understand why painted and carved portraits showing similar types with equal distinctness and emphasis produce very different effects on the observer and hold his attention in different ways, study must be made of the different results possible to attain by these arts. If these general propositions in regard to the two arts be true, the demands and characteristics of portraiture will become plainer.

The fundamental distinction between sculpture and painting lies in the fact that the former concerns itself not always, but primarily, with light and shadow and fully modelled forms, while the latter deals chiefly with colour. Furthermore, painting works in two dimensions, while sculpture exercises herself with three. Hence, figures in positions that are much contorted or groups that are complexly organised in retreating planes are unsuitable subjects for a painter, inasmuch as he cannot represent them clearly except at the expense of infinite labour. If the sculptor, on the other hand, chooses such subjects, he is not hampered by the difficulties that block the painter's path. His finished work can be looked at from all sides, and he is not liable to the painter's risk that his final effect may, perhaps, be ruined by a misuse of light and shade or by faulty drawing and perspective.

The advantage, however, is not altogether on one side. The

sculptor has this other difficulty to contend with, that the appearance of his work will change with every change of light. The painter can fix whatever light he pleases on his canvas. As the appearance of the sculptured work will vary with the light, the sculptor can attain but partial success in the representation of figures or scenes in which much active emotion is shown in the faces. But in such scenes as these a painter's power can well be shown, since, owing to his ability to paint any power of light (except, of course, direct sunlight), and his power of placing the various figures of a group in various lights, and by means of varied tints and lights being able to bring sharply into notice any expression of the face, he can well depict most violent emotion. It will be found, I think, that the sculpture which is most successful deals with groups or figures whose meaning is made clear by action and by the form of the body as a whole, and the paintings that are most successful are those in which effects of chiaroscuro, colour and facial expression are the most satisfactory method for making the figure intelligible. Several facts which will be readily acknowledged show the truth of this statement. For instance, Veronese, Rubens, Tintoretto, Velasquez when painting scenes the interest of which depends on the individual figures appearing in them (not such scenes as Paradise, Hell or battles where the interest is in the masses and spaces), compose them mainly in one plane. Also if single heads be taken from pictures and from sculptured groups, it will usually be found that the former give a fuller impression of the artist's intention than the latter.

Every rule has exceptions and among Michael Angelo's sculptures are works in which he sought to reproduce effects

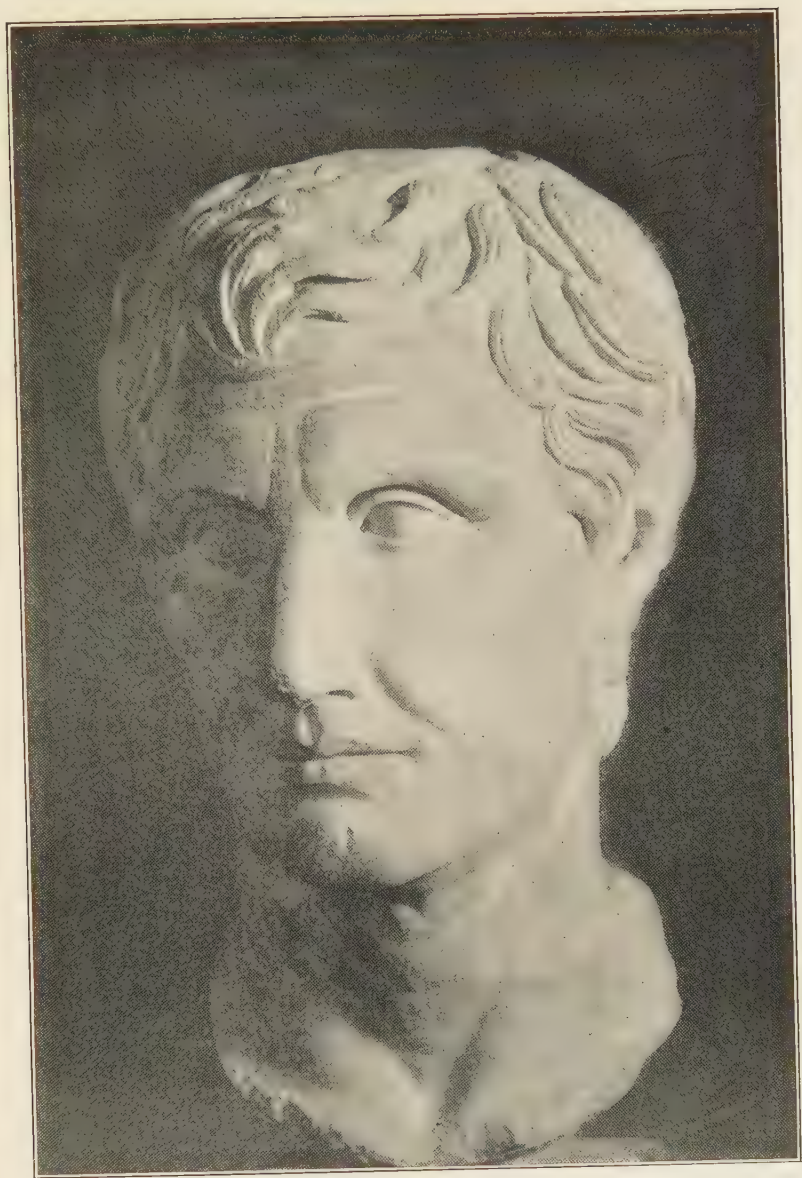


PLATE XLV.



of light and shade and expression that if given by painting would have been more successful because the latter would have expressed the artist's intention more clearly; and in certain of his paintings he attempted effects of form that could be given more satisfactorily by sculpture. Done by any less a genius than Michael Angelo, such work would be either ineffective or laboured. Done by him one can but marvel at his mastery over the sister arts that enabled him to approach so closely to the effects proper to the one while using the means offered by the other. But such success as he attained does not prove soundness in the principles that led him to make the attempt. A *tour de force* is but the attempt to attain a result by means other than the best. It may be successful, but it must be unsatisfactory. It is unreal, impractical; it is a form of jugglery!

To see how similar scenes are treated in the two arts, compare the group of Niobe and her Children with the Massacre of the Innocents as painted by the Renaissance artists.<sup>1</sup> In such comparison trivial details must not be too much regarded, for of the Niobe group there consists but one incomplete set of copies of the original figures and of the Massacre of the Innocents each one of us probably considers a different artist's conception of the scene most effective. But the general impression given by Niobe and her children is that of bodies driven into violent motion by fright, what might be called frightened motion; the figures are rushing from one spot to another in search of safety; they bend and cower in terror of

<sup>1</sup> In speaking of Niobe I refer naturally to the group in Florence and not to the less well known and understood earlier groups at St. Petersburg and elsewhere; typical examples of the massacre are those by Matteo di Giovanni, in the church of the Servi at Siena, and by Fra Angelico in the Academy at Florence.



the peril. They are the incarnation of dread of physical suffering. The impression of the Massacre of the Innocents is one of faces contorted by horror. The action of the bodies is of less concern. The attention is drawn to the eyes, the mouths, the hands, the three chief outlets of mental feeling. The sufferers in the scene are moved by the horror of unjustifiable slaughter. They are the incarnation of anger, revolt and despair induced by the sight of pitiless massacre.

In portraiture the painter and sculptor are drawn together because the greatest interest of the work is centred in the face, which is the clearest index of thoughts and emotions. Both sculptors and painters even when making figures of life size are limited in portraiture to seeking their chief effects in the treatment of the face. But though so far working in common, the painter and sculptor still have different aims; for that part of the head the expression of which can be more strongly accented and more completely reproduced by the use of colour and a chosen shade and light, is the eyes; while that part the expression of which can be most adequately rendered by modelling is the mouth. This is the reason why portraits similar in style, such as those above mentioned, the bust of Pericles, and the painting of the Duke of Norfolk, attract our attention in different ways. In the bust the most noticeable feature is the firm but sensitive mouth, in the painting it is the steady, but vivid, eye.

Mindful of these conditions that govern the art of portraiture we find it easy to see how the artists of various epochs have conformed to them. This may seem to be putting the cart before the horse; to be fitting the facts to the theory. But it is not so,—it is merely searching for proof of a work-



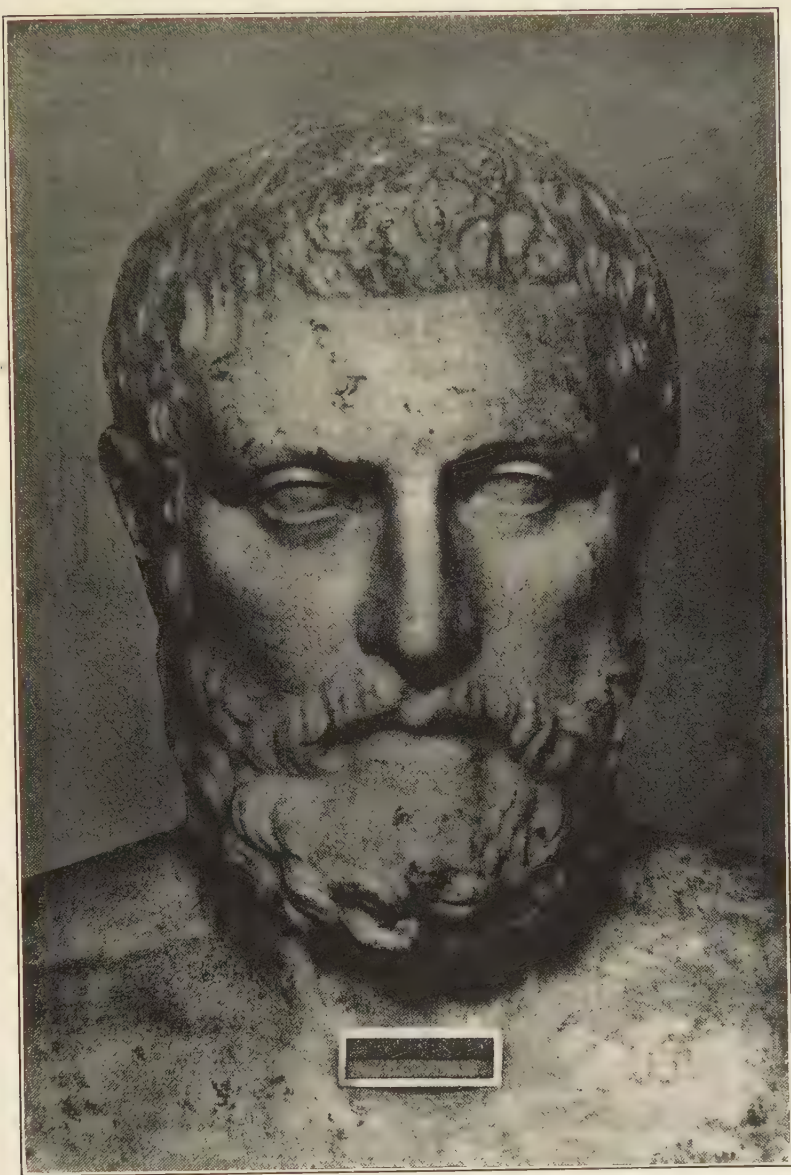


PLATE XLVI.



ing hypothesis. The theory was suggested by the phenomena and it will be seen to explain these phenomena.

The study of Greek sculpture is at present seriously hampered by statements and beliefs concerning it which arose at a time when its place in the history of art was very inaccurately understood. These have been repeated so often that they are frequently accepted without being critically weighed in the light of recent knowledge. It is a unique and very perfect art, but the causes and qualities of its perfection are sometimes misunderstood. Justifiable admiration has outweighed the critical faculties. It is generally thought to be more imaginative and ideal than is in fact the case. The quality of realism is not usually attributed to such a work as the portrait bust of Pericles. And yet this bust is quite as realistic, though not so prosaic, as that of the Roman general Corbulo. I mention these two because they are very generally known; but many others such as the Demosthenes, Sophocles, Cæsar, Caligula would do equally well. The word realism is reserved too much for those works in which the artist has represented the forms that would be first noticed by the casual observer and, in this limited sense, the Corbulo is far more realistic than the Pericles; but realism is just as truly displayed in works in which the forms, while reproducing those of the model, may perhaps not be the most obvious ones and though the juxtaposition of them be not their most common combination. In this sense the Pericles is as realistic as the Corbulo. Greek realism in portraits deals chiefly with faces and figures in repose; Roman realism deals in the main with faces and figures in action.

It is noteworthy that portraiture was a late development of

sculpture in Greece. We know, for instance, of no contemporary portraits of Solon or Peisistratus, and there exist in museums and private collections extremely few busts or statues of the period preceding the middle of the fifth century B.C., that have the character of portraits. One reason of this doubtless was the feeling that the success which brought fame in its train was due more to the Gods than to the individual. The individual was an accident in the exhibition of beneficent power by the Gods, and consequently, so far as form and feature are concerned, was of no special interest. Furthermore, there was the feeling that the fame of individuals was due to and a part of the fame of the whole state; hence the individual was not apt to overestimate his own value nor to be thought of by his neighbours with any such feeling of special respect as is expected by, and often granted to, those who are "self-made."

Over and above these causes was another which must have been largely responsible for the late development of portraiture and for its character when it began to be common. This was the Hellenic love of beauty. Divided though the Greeks were into numerous states, they were held together by bonds of language, tradition, religion and politics. But the bond that united them more strongly than all others, even than their hatred of barbarians, was their love of beauty. "Beauty the first of all things" says Isocrates "in majesty and honour and divineness. Nothing devoid of beauty is prized. The admiration of virtue itself comes to this, that, of all manifestations of life, virtue is the most beautiful." The consequence of this feeling was to make the individual and imperfect man uninteresting to the artist while the general and typical figure became his supreme aim. When at last in the fifth cen-

ture B.C. portraiture became more frequent than it had previously been, the perfect portrait was the one which gave most completely the impression of the general character of the man and not the one which gave the most vivid and striking representation of the separate features of his face.

Curiously enough the first portrait we hear of in Greece was a caricature of the poet Hipponax by Bupalos and Athenis, artists of the sixth century B.C. While caricature was attempted as early as this, as is shown by the drama, by terracotta figurines and by vases such as those from the sanctuary of the Kabeiroi in Bœotia, it may be questioned whether such a portrait of Hipponax ever existed. The details of the story, such as the suicide of the artists owing to the satirical attacks of the poet, are scarcely credible, and if we remember the very strange and unlikeli appearance of archaic art it seems not improbable that the story arose in the attempt to explain some rude statue the true intention of which had been long forgotten or had not been clearly indicated. Even were it certain that such a caricature did once exist, the knowledge would be of no great interest, because caricatures are but a debased form of art. They are only the exaggeration of accidental physical peculiarities. If the traces of a warped or ill-developed character show in the face or figure, the representation of them may be made a caricature, but almost all so-called caricatures show not oddities of character but deformities of person. It is in literature, in the works of Molière or Shakespeare, rather than in sculpture or painting, that we find true caricatures. Not that they do not exist in the plastic arts, but the literary art lends itself more readily than the others to this mode of representation.



Whatever the actual facts regarding the reported portrait of Hipponax may have been, it is not till about the first quarter of the fifth century (circ. 500-475) that we have undoubted evidence of portraiture. To that time belongs the bust of a bearded man wearing a helmet, in the Glyptothek in Munich. A replica of this work exists in the collection of Barrone Bar-racco in Rome. These two heads may well be copies of a statue of some victor in the games. As is known, portrait statues were allowed only to thrice victorious athletes, and they were erected not so much as an honour to the victor as to keep fresh the memory of one who had thrice been cherished by the Gods. But this rule governing the making of statues of athletes clearly shows what deep significance a statue was considered to express and the secondary importance to the Greek mind of keeping a record of personal appearance. Whether of a victor or not, the bust referred to belongs to the early period of development of the technique of sculpture, before it had been perfectly mastered, when the artist was able to represent not what he wanted to but what he was able to. Hence it is conventional; so much so that were it not for the helmet and the absence of any attribute of Divinity we could hardly be sure that it was intended as a portrait.

Probably the best known example of portraiture produced during the period when the technique of sculpture was thoroughly understood and mastered, is the head of Pericles by Kresilas to which I have already made reference (Plate XLIV). It is a work of special importance owing to the interest attaching to the character of Pericles, but more particularly from the artistic point of view; and fortunately there exist several





PLATE XLVII.



careful copies of it. These make us sure what its artistic character was,<sup>1</sup> and furthermore Pliny has handed down to us an estimate of the original work by a critic of the ancient world. This critic expressed concisely and epigrammatically the intention that is manifest in all Greek work of the best time, in saying that the bust of Pericles by Kresilas shows how art can make a noble man still nobler.<sup>2</sup> Now this can only be said of the best Greek and Italian work. And all work, no matter where or by whom produced, if wrought in the spirit which was shown more by Greek sculptors and Venetian painters than by other artists, may be described by such words. Such a criticism could not be made of most Roman or Florentine work. It can only be said of work in which the attempt is successfully made to suggest a perfected type by the improvement of an individual example, not of work the intention of which is to represent the individual example as the embodiment of special peculiarities with indifference as to their excellence or defects.

The method adopted by Kresilas is not difficult to analyse. The character of Pericles was a rare and happy mixture of calmness, foresight, perseverance and sensitiveness. His power of understanding men and conditions, together with his quiet and steady pursuit of his aims, is shown by the course of his political policy. His sensitiveness is made clear by his

<sup>1</sup> The copies known to me are (1) in the British Museum, (2) in the Vatican, (3) in the collection of Barrone Barracco, Rome, and (4) a fragment in the collection of Alden Sampson, Esq., Haverford, Penn.

<sup>2</sup> This is not the place to discuss the meaning of the Latin word *nobilis*. Suffice to say that if it is translated in this passage by its more commonplace equivalent of *famous*, the criticism has little point, since it is self-evident that an enduring monument, whether a statue or bust, adds to the fame of the individual in whose honour it is erected.

unselfish ambitions, by his delight in works of the fine arts and by his chivalrous conduct towards Aspasia, whom general opinion, not confined to the ancient world, would have allowed him to disregard and forget, when for the sake of giving offence to him the populace attacked her character. Such was the man whom Kresilas had to portray, and with high artistic perception he chose his means.

Kresilas, we can well understand, might have shown us Pericles the warrior, or Pericles the orator, or Pericles the lover of philosophy and the arts, and in doing so might have given a more striking impression of one or more of the special qualities by which his contemporaries were impressed. Instead of this he succeeded in setting before us the complex of all these qualities, and many more, that formed Pericles the man. The helmet lifted back from the face reminds us of his military career but does not force this on our attention.<sup>1</sup> The expression of the face is not in the least dreamy but is thoughtful and grave; an expression which, considering his life and friends, must have been habitual when he was in repose. It should not be forgotten that the attitudes assumed by the body when at rest show the presence or lack of inborn grace and dignity, and the expression of the face when in repose is an index to the mental nature. The expression of the eyes is open; the gaze is steady; the brow is undisturbed. The impression given by the eyes is of clear, highly developed intelligence. In the mouth which, as pointed out above, is the most in-

<sup>1</sup> It is a long-standing error to suppose that Pericles's skull as shown in these busts is peculiarly domed. The shape of the tilted helmet makes it seem to be so, but comparison with other heads covered by the Corinthian helmet shows that his is in no way abnormal when thus represented, however it may have been when uncovered.

dicative single feature in portrait sculpture, may be seen even more markedly than in the eyes, the man's character. It is a very noticeable mouth, with full and softly modelled lips, lips such as usually suggest a weak and sensuous character. But this mouth is neither insignificant nor weak. Its great sensitiveness passes into firmness in the closure of the lips and the strong jaw, and shows itself not as that of an ungoverned and libitudinous nature, but of a reserved and, in the best way, sensitive quality. It is a mouth that implies vigour but not self-will; the mouth of a very sensitive and appreciative, but not a sensual man.

Besides the character of eyes and mouth, the treatment of the whole head must be studied in order to understand what the critic meant when he wrote that this work made a noble man still nobler. The treatment is broad. The minor and accidental details are disregarded that the general effect may be clearer. The curling hair of head and beard, for instance, is not tossed about in disordered masses, as so often in later works, but is conventionalised. The artist realised that he could not imitate hair, and consequently sought for the best graphic symbol by which to suggest curls. In the modelling of the face he chose an expression of quietness and not one of any fitful, momentary emotion; and by not representing any slight irregularities of surface or structure, he emphasised and made more inevitably noticeable that expression which was most completely indicative of the man's essential nature. He has given us not alone Pericles the leader of the state, nor Pericles the patron of the fine arts, nor Pericles the impassioned orator, but the Pericles of history, the embodiment of all the best qualities bred in Athens.



It must not be thought that the Pericles head alone exhibits the qualities of both artist and sitter which I have attempted to suggest. In their various ways the portraits of Sophocles, Euripides, Demosthenes, the so-called Menander (Plate XLV), Periander (Plate XLVI) and many another famous Greek show similar æsthetic feeling.

It was but a short time after the death of Pericles that the intellectual conditions of Greece underwent a great change. Beliefs that, heretofore, had been universally held by the Greeks began to be questioned, and the conditions of statecraft passed into a new phase. The rise and fall of the Macedonian power was of lasting effect on the Greek character. Alexander exhibits the type, which became common again in the Renaissance, of the selfish despot who maintained his power by having the money to maintain his personal influence. His thoughts were set chiefly on his own personal glory as expressed in his empire. He tried, but unsuccessfully, to make his court the centre of the artistic life of the day. He was not a patron of the arts but of artists. To Lysippus alone was granted the right to carve his portrait. No natural development of the arts was possible under such conditions.

The granting of such a monopoly to Lysippus shows that Alexander was merely interested in producing on posterity a good effect so far as his portraits could help him to do so. Copies of some of these portraits exist. They are fine in many ways and, to a high degree, lifelike, but they and other similar works of the epoch lack the quietness and repose of the works of earlier times. There is a melodramatic feeling in the looser treatment of the hair, and, oftentimes, an attempt to give a superhuman expression to the face.



These qualities, as critics have often noticed, are to be found in all the forms of art of the time, so far as we now have the means of judging. Even in architecture there is a noticeable change. Stone is not laid so carefully, the cutting of details is coarser and mouldings are heavier; masses are less finely proportioned and the effects of light and shade are made more definite and striking. The miniature portraits on gems and coins show the same characteristics as the large busts, and the mere fact of putting portraits of contemporary rulers on the coinage shows that the relation of the individual to the state had changed and that, on the one hand, the desire for personal fame was spreading over the world — a desire which became still more marked in the Roman and Renaissance epochs; while on the other the worship of rulers, introduced from the Orient, had firmly entrenched itself. In fact, these Hellenistic portraits are not simple. While the technique is still Greek, there is something else in them than the desire of the artist to show the sitter as he appeared to his contemporaries, even in a rightly idealised manner, — they manifest the desire of the sitter to be admired.

The tendencies of the time were all towards exactness of representation of existing forms, and this was soon attained. Perhaps it would have been reached even sooner had it not been for certain interests which held the sculptors partially to the old-time aims. One such conservative influence is shown in the work of Silanion, who became famous for his portraits of persons dead long before his day. Such work, if it was to satisfy a large public, and this was what it aimed at and succeeded in doing, had to be of a broad, general and unemphasized character, for the nature and appearance of per-

sons known only by tradition is necessarily more vaguely and variously observed, less easily and surely grasped, than that of the living. Hence, if Silanion had made portraits that suggested strongly what seemed to him the most vital characteristic of the person represented, he would probably have found that many of his contemporaries considered some very different characteristic the most essential. To please the many it was needful for his work to embody only those ideas that were generally accepted. Such work cannot be realistic in the sense of attracting attention to detailed peculiarities.

Greek portraiture became rapidly more and more prosaically realistic. But even in its last stages, when Greek artists were still employed by Greek patrons, the realism is generally restrained. The old conventionalism and typifying of the model is gone, and there is greater frankness in the rendering of special peculiarities of hair or skin; but the work is generally quiet and dignified, calm in expression and reposeful in action. The artist puts before us not the type and idea suggested by the man, nor, except in special cases, the man's own desire regarding his appearance, but the real daily aspect of the man, dressed up not at all, treated in accordance with the essential rules of sculpture as a fine art.

That there were, however, some artists who amused themselves and a thoughtless public with portraits that were vulgarly realistic — realistic, that is, in the representation of ugly and unessential details — is shown by what we know of Demetrius of Alopeke. He is noted solely for his successful rendering of ugliness. But there was too much cultivated taste in what remained of the Greek world, and too much vigour and good sense in the growing Roman world, for such work to

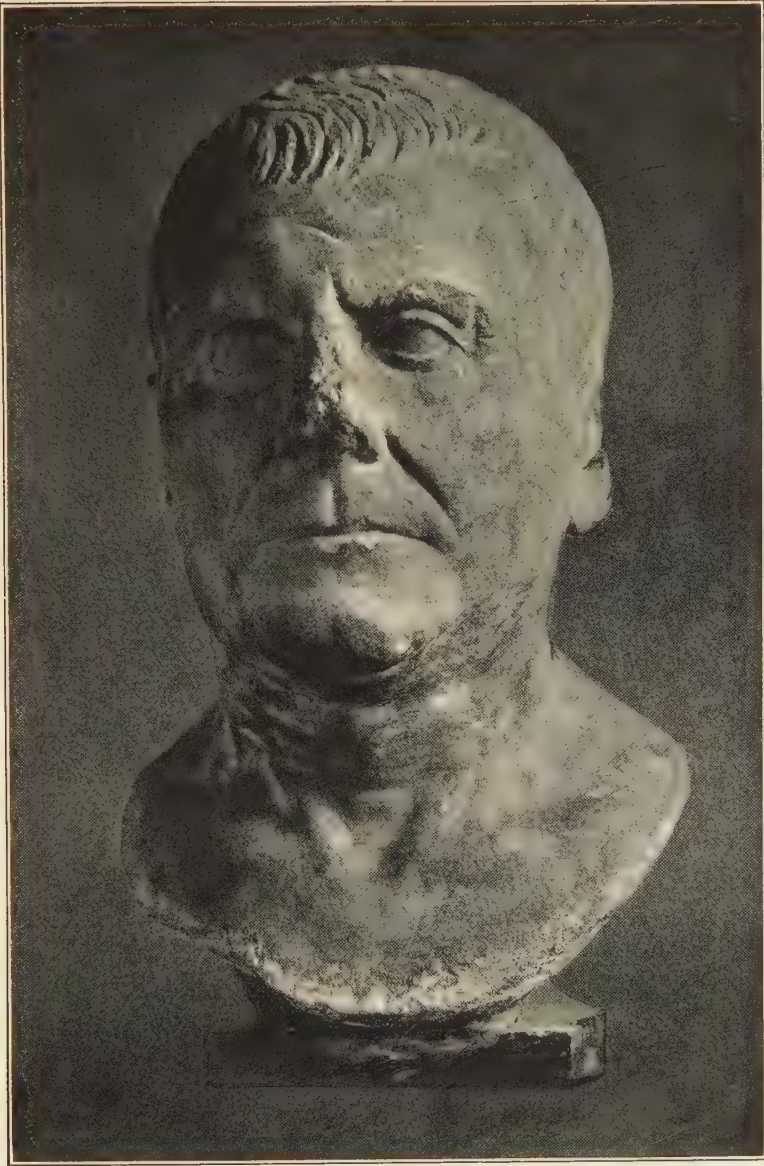


PLATE XLVIII.





become popular. To see realism developing in a strong and healthy manner, we must turn to Rome where, though the actual carving was done, with few exceptions probably, by Greek workers, still the character of the work itself was controlled by Roman ideas (Plate XLVII).

The dry, matter of fact quality of Roman portraiture as opposed to the more imaginative work of the Greeks, has long been recognised. Its direct and unadorned presentation of the human face is noted by the most careless observer and is to most people pleasing. It makes them feel at ease; they have the sensation of being with real people; it does not demand of them a mental effort to analyse the appearance before them in order to understand it. But notwithstanding the facility with which one derives very definite, and it may be lasting, impressions from these Roman busts, they are by no means as simple and artless as they seem at first sight to be. They are the product of complex influences and a highly developed art and are as difficult to understand and properly appreciate as are the earlier Greek ones.

We may illustrate what has been said by glancing a moment at a portrait of an unknown old man<sup>1</sup> (Plate XLVIII). This is a superb example of Roman portraiture of the time of the Republic. It cannot lay claim to any beauty of form or feature; it is uncompromisingly homely. Nevertheless it has a certain fascination for the beholder. The sculptor was a great master. The way in which he has rendered the signs of old age in the withered neck, the irregular wrinkles of the brow, and the uneven mouth is magnificent. It is realism of a perfect kind, for the evidence of the wear and tear of life is

<sup>1</sup> In the Brandegee Collection.

subdued by and made minor to the splendid and enduring vigour of the mind and character behind the cheerful old face. What an old age! The sap may be running slow, the body may show the blows dealt by life, but the stiff, short hair is still thick, the head is still held upright and forward. It is a face of a clean-living, plain-thinking man, one who had "held both hands before the fires of life," and seems to scarcely suppress a smile at the thought that any one should want the portrait of his old face.

Roman art, as a whole, was practical and uninspired, and far from imaginative. In large measure it served either to answer some definite practical end or to satisfy (as in the decoration of palaces) the Roman taste for grandeur and display. It shows the influence of a less full-hearted and unquestioning religious inspiration than that which had such marked effect on the early art of Greece and again in the Renaissance. The work of all the various branches of art produced in the Roman territory before the importation of Greek artists was of the rudest. It was necessary to employ Etruscans to decorate the temple of the Capitoline Jove and until the first century before Christ the artistic product of Rome seems to have been scanty. The energies of the people were expended in war and colonisation. They were essentially a commercial race. The existence of their city was derived from and depended on their control of foreign trade. The first necessity of such a city was to master the business of political organisation and not to cultivate the tastes that minister to affluence and ease. Pride of race and the acquisition of great wealth were results of the transformation of the small republic into the great empire, and with pride



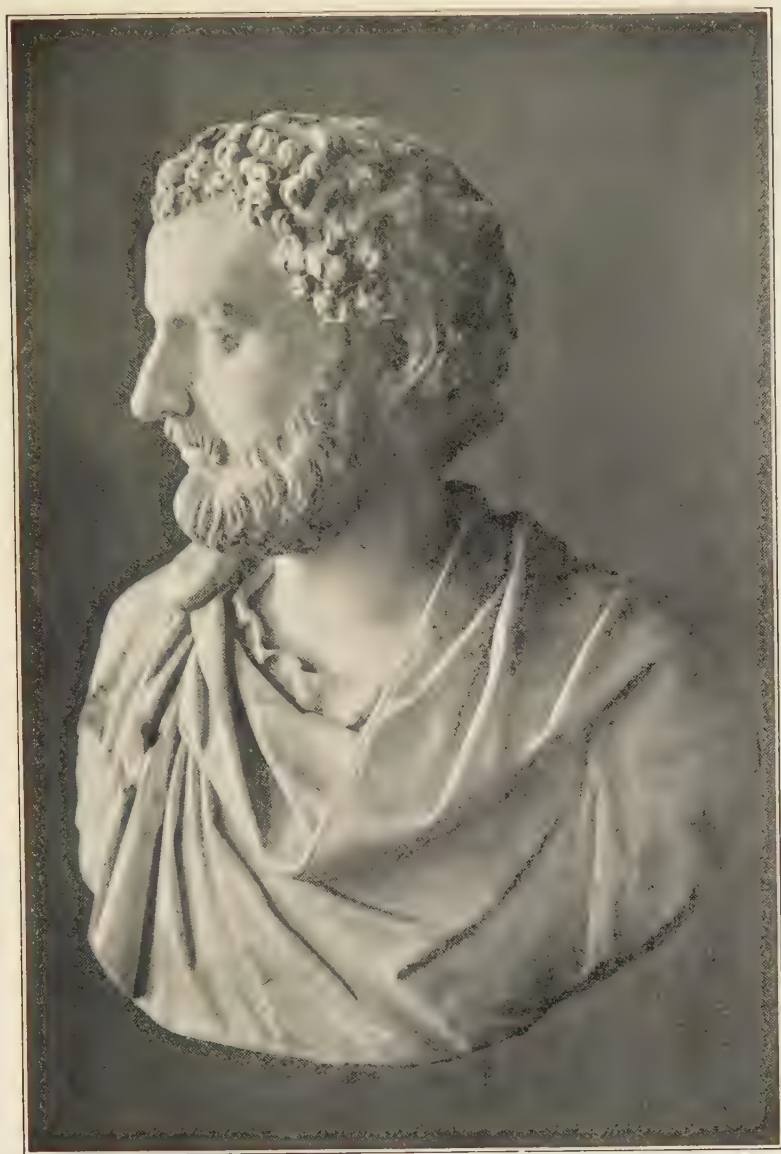


PLATE XLIX.



and money came luxury, and the arts, with the desire for portraits.

Pliny tells of portraits made of wax, owned by the various families, which were carried in funeral processions, — how these were considered as belonging to the house and in case of the sale of the latter passed with it to the new owner; such portraits as these would, like the earlier Egyptian ones, tend to the purest realism of external appearance. He mentions also the muniment rooms filled with records of ancestors. Stress was laid on the actions of the illustrious dead in order that the ensuing generations might be stirred to ambitious effort. Very different is this from the Grecian sinking of the individual in the state. Roman tombstones exhibit the same pride in great deeds and the same interest in details. They are entirely different from the Greek grave monuments. The Greek gives the name of the deceased, and sometimes a greeting to the living wayfarer who may pass by and note the tomb; or, sometimes he inscribed a plaintive verse — the expression of a broken heart — but nothing more. How old were the dead? What had they done? No one now can tell. Their course was run and the restless curiosity of later ages must remain unsatisfied. On Roman tombstones all this is very different. They tell us the age and family of the deceased, their occupation, what offices they had held and their age even to days. In the cases where a portrait of the dead person is added, it is treated in no general and typical way; but the individual is set before us with unsparing accuracy.

This interest in the events of each individual life led to the chief difference between Roman and Greek portrait busts. The Roman thought of the great men of his country as the

persons who had done such and such things rather than as the leaders of such and such policies. Consequently, the Roman portraits suggest activity and not repose, — action and not thought. The idea embodied in the bust is not of a placid and meditative but of a positive and active cast. The portraitist seems almost always to represent his sitters at the moment when they were accomplishing the great deed that brought them fame. The eyes are made expressive by being distinctly focussed, and this expression is emphasised by the treatment of the brow, which oftentimes is more or less wrinkled or contracted in a way that suggests vigorous, passing, mental action. In many cases the ball of the eye is cut so as to produce a strong shadow and thus to suggest the pupil. This also makes the fixed look more intense, but unless the light is exactly right it is apt to produce an unpleasant appearance.

That an artist should do this shows the desire for dramatic, restless effects. The treatment of the lips and the part of the face about the mouth also suggests an expression not typical of any general trend of thought so much as of some momentary and strong emotion. Then the way the head is set on the neck and turns sharply to one side or the other can be understood only by supposing that the artist represented the sitter as he appeared when employed on some one active and characteristic piece of work. There is, for instance, in Corbulo none of the Greek treatment of the individual as a type, but everything is done to make more prominent the individualities of the man. And just as the Pericles is not alone in its class, so too the Corbulo is matched by many others, such as the Julius Cæsar, the Augustus, Caracalla or Antoninus Pius (Plate XLIX).

As one looks at these Roman portraits one frequently



PLATE L.





feels that the persons are on the point of moving. But notwithstanding this quality of life which has led to their being called realistic, the best of them are no more merely superficial in their realism than the best Greek busts. Neither class is vulgarly realistic and imitative solely in the external, but both depend for their effect on the correct comprehension and presentation of actual phenomena of form and facial expression. The different effect they produce is due to the fact that the Greek desired an expression of the inner man, the man as he was to himself, while the Roman desired the expression of the man as he showed himself to others. Putting the case concisely, and remembering that such conciseness does not express the completest truth, we may say that one was the portrait of man as a thinker, the other of man as a doer.

In the foregoing explanation of the nature of Roman portraits, no account has been taken of the numerous beautiful busts of children and women that were carved by the sculptors of the Eternal City. At first sight these seem to contradict the contention that the almost universal intention of the Roman sculptor was to make a portrait of a single sharply defined phase of his sitter's personality. They seem to be done rather in accordance with Greek taste; but closer study will reveal that they are not truly Greek, — that their real nature is Roman and their seeming Grecian spirit is an illusion due to accident and not to intention.

Busts of children or women made to show character in action could never resemble the Roman busts of men. The qualities that make the character of men are non-existent, or at least undeveloped, in the child, and in the woman take another form. The Greek by his generalising and typifying

process which brought about the production of placid figures was led to express chiefly those qualities which produce similar effects in all faces. The Roman, though searching for active expression still noted in the child as the most beautiful and characteristic qualities, softness, roundness and breadth of modelling, and the dignity of infantine demeanour. Hence the Roman heads of children have a somewhat Greek look, but in every part, as for example the hair, where stress can be laid on accidental and purely individual appearance, this is done (Plate L). The Greek appearance was inherent in the object; the most suggestive symbol to express curled or straight locks was sought, but to carve hair in all its fairness of strand, in all its waving masses or its fantasticalities of fashion, was not the aim of the sculptor. In Roman work the hair is scarcely ever conventionalised in a Grecian manner but shows the fashion of the day. Usually, the head is not symmetrically placed, but is turned to one side or the other, implying that the child's attention was attracted to some special object.

The same points are to be noted in the portraits of women. In their faces as in children's the beauty and softness of feature led to something like a Greek breadth of modelling, but the hair and the action of the head are purely Roman (Plate LI).

The Florentine portraits show these same characteristics. Among them also the children and women seem at first glance to be Grecian or Venetian in character, but, when looked at more closely, one sees that those features which are not mere copies of nature but which show artistic intention are not Venetian, nor Greek, in character, but Roman. Yet another class of Florentine monuments which are at first sight misleading in the same way are the recumbent statues on tombs.



PLATE LI.



In these the Greek quality of quietness and repose is very marked and is due to the artist being called upon to represent faces modelled by the stilling touch of death and no longer to be thought of as showing active forces. But even in these figures the intense actuality of feature, the lack of conventionalising and typifying, is noticeable. In fact there is little doubt that oftentimes the artist did his work not from sketches of the living model but from a death mask.

If now we consider from a more general point of view this art of portraiture and its relationship to times and peoples, certain things become clear. Portraiture may be due, as in Egypt, to some religious motive, but this is uncommon. Where it develops as an art, simply for its æsthetic value, we note that it becomes a general practice only as ideal and imaginative work loses ground. While the Greeks never, in a certain sense, showed much imagination in their sculpture, it is unquestionable that towards the end of the fifth century B.C., when portraiture becomes prominent, the idealising and religious works decrease and deteriorate. The same truth holds good in Italy during the Renaissance, when much more imagination was shown than in Greece.<sup>1</sup> Portraiture is due to a family interest in its own members or to a people's interest in an individual. It is not practised (for artists such as Silanion are not true *portraitists*) by the artist to please himself.

But whatever may be the interests, private or public, that call for portraiture, the art becomes common only in times of centralisation, times when large fortunes, and hence great

<sup>1</sup> One instance will suffice to show what I mean by this. Far more pure imagination is shown in the Italian representations of the Creation or the Last Judgment than in the Greek scenes of the lives of their Gods with which they decorated pediment and frieze.



power, are possessed by individuals. Furthermore, no matter who may be the persons represented (setting aside women and children) it is not possible to carve or paint them except in one of two ways, as an embodiment of thought, or as an embodiment of action. The former method appealed to Greeks and Venetians, — the latter better pleased the Romans and Florentines. Both are realistic because both strive to show in one way or another actually existent forms and expressions. It depends on each man's natural temperament which will give him most satisfaction. Other methods are frequently adopted in the modern struggle for originality, but it is safe to say that they will exert little influence on the development of art, for, while they may be clever devices, while they make certain effective features particularly prominent, they are still unsatisfactory because they produce at best but a partial likeness. If it be granted that there are but two great methods of portraiture, there is yet no reason to fear that dulness will ensue. The interest excited by the individual man comes from the character shown.

There are just double as many portraits, potentially, as there are individuals, and the interest of portraiture lies in what the artist makes us comprehend of the nature of the man. Too often the public is deceived into thinking that the work of handicraftsmen, with little or no power of reading and understanding character, is to be judged as true portraiture. Such work may be decorative in chiaroscuro, it may be pleasant as colour; but the mere drawing of a face, even if what is called a good likeness is produced, is not portraiture. It is but the outer husk and dead wrapping hiding the vital germ within.



## II. PHEIDIAS AND MICHAEL ANGELO

DIFFERENT as were the lives and works of the two sculptors whose names are more familiar to us than those of any others, there were, nevertheless, many circumstances of closely related character that affected their careers. But apart from such circumstances the consideration of even those influences which were absolutely different in the one case and in the other, exhibits clearly some of the broader laws of the art practised by them both. In truth, it is the art rather than the individual style of the sculptors that is worth study, for the art is a language, the works but the expression of single ideas; the one is a perpetual and constantly varying power, the other but separate thoughts expressed.

Naturally the two interests, one that of becoming more familiar with the products of the "fine intelligence of noble minds," the other the more abstract one of a more intimate knowledge of the powers and possibilities of one of the fine arts, are inextricably combined. The study of the two sculptors mentioned is particularly interesting owing to the ever-increasing production of sculpture in our own day; and owing to various conditions in modern life, there is a close relationship in many important matters between us and these two masters of days long past. Therefore, whatever can be certainly learned about them will help us to appreciate more truly the work and workers of to-day and to-morrow. Noth-

ing can help more to attain this appreciation and sympathy than the study of the great workers of past ages, even when they may to a casual glance seem to be of somewhat remote interest.

The work of men such as Pheidias and Michael Angelo cannot be considered by any serious student as in fact remote from our time and interests. The study of the Past, particularly that part filled by Greece, becomes every day more and more general and the influence of the Renaissance in Italy upon modern thought and work is seen on every hand; here we come to the first noteworthy fact regarding these two sculptors. It is not going too far to say that all the best Greek sculpture, that is to say, what was produced during the latter half of the fifth century before Christ and the fourth century, was strongly influenced by Pheidias and that his influence shows itself intermittently until the end of the ancient world.

It would of course be too much to claim Pheidias as the originator of all the qualities in sculpture which are apt, nowadays, to be named Pheidian, but as the master who most adequately expressed the ideals held in his time so far as sculpture allowed of their expression, he may be used as the type; and among the varied interests which Michael Angelo and the other students of the Renaissance found in Greek work were several that may properly be called Pheidian.

This influence of Greek work on the Renaissance can hardly be over estimated. It shows itself in many ways and with varying force, — sometimes producing direct imitation of ancient works, then again becoming manifest in new work done with the intention of reviving the spirit of the ancient

world. Michael Angelo did not fall under the spell as completely as many of his less vigorously original contemporaries, but it was no more to be entirely avoided by him than one of the laws of nature. Thus with the work of the Greeks directly affecting us to-day in a very similar way to that in which it affected the Italians in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and with the work of the later period, deeply tintured with the Grecian dye, also influencing us, it becomes deeply interesting to find in what the greatest artists of the two periods were alike and wherein they differed one from the other.

The influence of Pheidias on the art of his race was not so much that of the originator or inventor as it was that of the poet, who gathering the various and unconnected beauties that are felt by all, though less keenly than by him, binds them together by the indefinable power of his genius and gives back to the admiring world not separate things of beauty but a standard of the beautiful and perfect. And this power of genius deals with such finenesses, is so subtle, that oftentimes it is almost beyond the power of words to make clear the manner of its working. As the sensitiveness of the photographic plate is greater than that of the eye, so the trained and perceptive eye notes much that can only with difficulty be expressed by words. The genius is felt, it thrills and vivifies the observer, but it cannot be expounded like a problem in mathematics.

For this reason, we must believe, the few great writers on these matters are oftentimes scoffed at by persons whose eyes have not been trained to see nor their hearts to understand. Not that the scoffers can be blamed for this unhappy sterility

of their powers, for in most cases the circumstances of life have not been of that fortunate kind which would enable them to acquire the finer faculties. They are only to be blamed in so far as either through envy or stupidity they refuse to believe that others may be endowed with power which is lacking to them — power dependent upon long and arduous training. It is a curious but familiar phenomenon that the person who will not hesitate an instant to admit that the trained rider or sportsman or oarsman can ride, shoot or row better than he can, will energetically claim for himself as fine-seeing an eye, or a mind as keenly interpretative, as the practised artist or the scholar. That is, he asserts that the exercises of the body need training, but those of eye and brain do not, a theory manifestly absurd.

The genius of Pheidias is so ultimate in its fineness that it needs long training before it can be properly appreciated. If this is doubted, one has but to consider the fact, that among all the numerous references to him and his work which are preserved for us in ancient writers, not one mentions him, as his elder contemporaries Myron, Pythagoras, Kalamis or many others are mentioned, as having been the first to institute any particular detail of carving. No new treatment of the hair, no new way of representing the body, no special scheme of proportion are attributed to him, and yet the absolute consensus of opinion was that he was the unrivalled master of them all. Fashions changed, and a new one, that of making collections, arose, which demanded the satisfaction of individual tastes, but Pheidias's fame knew no eclipse.

Besides this subtle quality in his genius, this weaving of the various beautiful threads spun by others into one consummate





PLATE LII.





stuff, there are other qualities that render his work difficult to appreciate. One is that the ideals both of religion and of life were very different from those of to-day, so that we have to lay aside all preconceived notions and at first regard him as children who wonder but do not understand. This is the hardest task the student ever has to master, to free himself from the bonds of the conventions, beliefs and circumstances common to his own day and study the work of another time with (so far as he can accomplish it) an understanding sympathy with the conventions, beliefs and circumstances belonging to those other days. Still a further difficulty lies in the fact that there does not exist in the world one single work of which we can say: this is truly and completely by Pheidias. The marble figures from the Parthenon show his quality in many respects clearly but these we know were worked upon by assistants. Other works by him exist in copies, but for the most part these copies can be shown to be bad and should be used as evidence only with the utmost care. Yet, notwithstanding these difficulties, the image that we have of him is, it can scarcely be doubted, clearly defined in the main outlines.

How different is all this in the case of Michael Angelo! Here our embarrassment is of a character diametrically opposed and comes from the fact that we are so burdened with details about his life and work that the really important matters are partially obscured by trivialities. Contemporaries and fellow-workmen wrote his life; his letters and poems have been preserved; documents of all sorts regarding his works exist, and the works themselves are where they can be easily seen.

Beyond all these aids to our knowledge of the man we have, again, the more vital one that the age in which he lived is almost as well understood as our own, and many of the greater currents of thought and action were but little different to those of the present time. Unlike the Pheidian time, but like to-day, his was not a period when governments deeply believed in the protection of their Gods nor one in which the individual was scarcely considered except as a detail of the state, nor when portrait statues were almost unknown. Conquest for the love of gain, and commonwealths subdued to one will, were the rule. The truly Greek period in the development of Italy, the time of the blossoming of Venice, of Siena, of Florence had given way to the Alexandrian epoch. Though the idea that the will of the masses should govern the state was fortunately not yet formulated, the development of individualism was well under way, and instead of men governing their lives by general ideals they all sought to raise themselves on the shoulders of their less fortunate brothers to enjoy a little while the glory of a special and peculiar fame. Hence called as he was to lend his power to the satisfaction of such desires as these, Michael Angelo's work was in many cases, in those, that is, where he was working for a master other than his own instinct, tinged with a character utterly out of accord with that of Pheidias, and yet curiously enough even in these works there are signs of a strong undercurrent of feeling which would have bound him and Pheidias together as the most sympathetic friends, thus showing that at bottom art is not governed by circumstance of time or place.

There were however certain very important aspects in which life as Michael Angelo saw it in Italy, and particularly in

Florence, was curiously similar to what it was in Athens in the fifth century B.C. The climate and general appearance of the two countries is even now not unlike, and it must have been much less so in the time when the hills of Greece were so forest-grown that Pan and the nymphs could really live in comfort there, and before modern improvements had eradicated many of the individual peculiarities of Italy. Then too the habits of the cultivated classes were similar. Under very different forms the principles of education seem to have been the same. The schooling shown in Castiglione's Cortegiano is like that given the Grecian youth. It was an education which comprised, both in Greece and in Italy, music, drawing, a knowledge of the thought and actions of past generations and a mastery of all those exercises that conduced to self-defence or to the more perfect development of the body. Similar training naturally taught the men of these two worlds to see life in very similar ways, and although the teachings of the Catholic Church were very different from those of the Greek religion in regard to the relations between men and women, yet life and instinct were stronger than the holy teachings, and in this point too the simplicity and naturalness of the Greek found its counterpart in Italy.

It is easy to see that the power exerted by these various influences on the art of sculpture was very great, more so even than on the sister art of painting, for it is on the realisation of what constitutes a fine body, on the equal simplicity of treatment of the woman's form and the man's, and the knowledge of what ideas can be best interpreted in terms of form, that the art of sculpture depends. Art is but the translation of emotion, and each particular art has a particular way of

accomplishing the translation ; and in this, painting and sculpture are more closely connected than any two other arts, so much so that sculptors in the two greatest periods — the Greek and the Renaissance — rarely considered their work as finished until the power of colour had been used to heighten the effect, and often practised the two arts coincidently. But during these two periods the limits imposed by the materials of the various arts were clearly recognised and closely adhered to, and in the best sculpture of the Renaissance there is no more attempt to represent landscape or other purely colour effects than in the Parthenon. Sometimes, however, as in the drapery of the Moses or the modelling of the Pietà in St. Peter's, Michael Angelo does seem to overstep the limits of sculpture and to seek for effects which could be more simply and much more intelligibly given in painting than in stone ; effects that need the manifold devices of light and shade and colour which are at the disposal of the painter rather than the sculptor.

This is, however, a rare weakness in the works of Michael Angelo, and one that apparently never entered those of Pheidias. One reason for this is that the art of painting was more completely comprehended in Italy than in Greece, and the Italian artists, more commonly than the Grecian, practised both arts. Hence, great painter as well as great sculptor, endowed with a readiness of hand, such as scarcely any other artist ever had, to reproduce whatever his mind imaged, it is no wonder that Michael'Angelo at times went beyond the bounds of one art and seemed magically to interfuse the beauties of both of them. It would have been a greater wonder had he not done so. It was not a sign of his weakness so much





PLATE LIII.





as of his strength, of the inability of any one art to satisfy the artist's desire and ideal. In this greater complexity, which shows at times in the detail of his work, Michael Angelo differed from Pheidias, but, almost invariably, the two artists, while differing in their feeling for line, or gesture, or substance, treat the human figure and its accessories in the same way. In both one sees a distinct and necessary dwelling on the nude.

Where the human figure is chosen as the object of a work of art, there are but two chief means by which to represent the emotions it contains, one the expression of the face, one the action of the body as a whole. It is in the representation of the face, the most palpable index of the emotions, that painting, with its power over almost infinitesimal lights and shades, finds fullest scope for its power, while it is in the greater lines of the frame and the larger gestures that sculpture satisfies herself. So it is that in the sculptural work of both Michael Angelo and Pheidias one finds drapery treated not, as was distinctly the case in the statues of Praxiteles, for its own special beauty apart from the whole work, but as a means of emphasising the beauty of the body whose details it hid.

Look at the group of three women from the western pediment of the Parthenon, or the Lemnian Athena, or the Caryatids of the Erechtheum (Plate LII) — for these are utterly Pheidian in character even if not by the master himself — or the figures on the frieze of the Parthenon (Plate LVII) or the Hegeso relief. In all these the drapery ripples over the shoulders and breasts, breaking in great falls around the waist and legs to disappear and fade away in little curling waves around the feet, not hiding the soft details of the figure

underneath but serving rather as a frame to emphasise the beauties and set them in true relation to the surroundings. That there was any ethical need of hiding the figure would have seemed the height of absurdity to the Greek or the Italian. Out of the dark it comes and back to the dark it goes in this Adamite condition, so why should the artist not use it so if it serves his purpose?

Thus it has been used in all times when there was a vital art, and such times have been distinguished for greater sanity of thought and health of body than when art was governed by mediæval fanaticisms. Michael Angelo's figures are as distinguished for this quality as are those shaped by the Grecian chisel. His feeling for the value of the nude is so strong that he can hardly suffer the drapery at all. The Moses, the Madonnas, the Medici Princes are to all intents in large measure undraped. Considered as draped figures they distinctly lack the temperance and quiet nobility of the Greek figures, for the reason that although his feeling towards the relation of draped and nude parts is the same, Michael Angelo does not attain his end in as consummate a way. He makes too sharp a distinction between the parts that are really draped, the parts that are but seem not to be, and the nude. But in one point of this same nature the two artists are completely alike. They both regarded the human figure from the purely artistic point of view as a means to suggest certain ideas. The religious meaning, the question as to its sanctity or unhallowedness, no more occurred to them than to question the advisability of warming themselves before the fire when they were cold because there were fires in Hell. They were completely natural.

In regard to the lack of complexity and to the greater repose, it may be admitted that Pheidias has the advantage over Michael Angelo whose works, true index as they are of his character, suffered from the time in which he lived — his character suffered and hence his work. His was a time of scepticism and hence of worry. The tranquillity that marked the Greek mind was rarely found in his day. Aretino was planting the destructive roots of modern journalism, and except, in a way marked by strong affectation, at certain courts, one would have had to go far to find Platonic Symposia or Olympic gatherings. The cloudy brow of Michael Angelo himself as well as of many of his figures is a sign how the perplexity of the times preyed upon the sculptor and in turn affected not only the chief motive of many of his works but also their very details.

And, if we admit the truth, this worry and perturbation is more natural to us than is the Greek grace and calm which, to those who do not understand the time, seems unnatural and forced. It was not so, however. The Greek was never forced, but though he felt intensely, he considered that the possession and exercise of control over emotion was as much to be desired as the power which found expression in beating back barbarian hordes. The tenderness of Greek friendships is proverbial, but the whole tone of Greek tragedy is of passion held in check, — carried in the heart rather than worn on the face. Slaves and servants gave way to noisy grief, but not their masters. A Greek of the Periclean age could scarcely have understood the worn, wearied, soul-troubled look of the *Pensieroso*. It was not that the Greek was unimpassioned, but he never let his passions govern him. He guided them as

a rider guides a restive horse — as the youths on the Parthenon guide theirs — calming and soothing them lest the animal become the master and break away from the chosen path.

This difference in the character of the two races was due largely to religion, which had the most marked effect on the work produced in the two countries. One is apt to think, when one sees the limitless mass of churches, decorated by painter and sculptor, in Italy, and the unending array of lesser works of distinctly religious intent, that no art could be more religious than that of Italy. But just as in the conduct of individuals it is the spirit rather than the form of action that is the true index to their character, so in art it is the feeling the work shows, and not merely its outer form, which indicates its true nature and value. Now not merely in the number of religious works was Greece in the Periclean days as distinguished as ever Italy was, but she was far more noteworthy, in that her religion was a much more vital impulse than that of Italy. This is certainly true of the Periclean as opposed to the Medicean age.

In the light of present knowledge the circumstances that led to these conditions are discernible. Like every innocent race the Greeks had a firm belief in the Gods, beings developed in their minds by very varied influences, and for the most part not of a character to serve as guides to ideal conduct after the race had once gained the capacity for using its mind in a logical way. One or two of these beings were, however, as noble as any such conceptions at any time. This power to use the mind rationally was not yet a national possession when Pheidias grew up. It was just becoming so. The development of the mind, the strength of it, was there, but for a few decades



circumstances turned the thoughts of the people away from philosophic consideration to more ecstatic modes in which old conceptions were clung to with passionate fondness and made more beautiful, but a change of belief was the work of a following generation.

These circumstances were chiefly a consequence of the Persian Wars. Greece was threatened with destruction. Athens was harried, and the glories of the Acropolis were razed to the ground. Phœnix-like they disappeared in fire to have an image of themselves more splendid in its youth and vigour rise as a light to all the world. But though the barbarian had for a moment seemed master of the situation, the Greeks had, with the active help of the Gods, been the final victors and it was in the service of thanks to their divine helpers that Pheidias found his chief employment. It was only in the very early years of the Renaissance that the Italians experienced any such miracles as those which Pheidias's elder contemporaries had known — as, for instance, at the battle of Ravenna — and the effect on them then was much the same as it had been on the Greeks. It was the actual presence of the Gods at critical moments that stirred the Greeks. In Athens Athena's snake led them to safety, at Salamis the Aiakidoi inspired the heroes with their battlecry, and Pan himself urged the weary messenger over the mountain passes. The Greeks no more doubted that their victory was due to assistance lent them by the Gods than that there had been a war. One event was as real to them as the other, so it was natural for them, as soon as their hearths were once more lit, to render thanks to their Divinities by raising images of them on all sides, that they might never forget them, and by building

for the houses of their Gods as beautiful temples as could by any possible means be made.

We may frankly concede that the grandeur of this work, the generousness of it, can only be understood when one fully grasps the fact that a Greek temple was, what the Christian's is not, the house of the Lord. In it but few and most private services were performed, — no processions, no crowds of more or less attentive worshippers, no expounding of the word, nothing whatever of that sort. The temple was the sacred dwelling place of the deity, and the curious no more thought of entering it than of opening uninvited their fellow-citizen's door. It was a free gift to the God and not to be thought of as a source of satisfaction to the builders except in the same way as it pleases a lover to have his mistress accept some gift at his hands. This feeling is repeated frequently in Pindar and in other poets inspired by the 'golden muse.' So it was that, flushed with the excitement of a great cause nobly won, the Greeks turned the full force of their keen, glad energy to works that showed their own greatness by manifesting with the sharpness of full understanding the form of their ideals.

In our day, animated by so different interests and ambitions, it is hard to sympathise with this natural idealistic work done in Athens, and it is perhaps even harder to understand why it was that Pheidias and the other artists were not called on to erect portrait statues of the great leaders of the war as were the artists of the Renaissance. There is mention of a statue to Miltiades, and this is all. The reason becomes clear immediately we consider well what were the fundamental principles of conduct as taught by the poets, who were in those days in large measure the formulators of public opinion. Pin-





PLATE LIV.



dar is as clear-spoken about this as need be, and he but repeats what one finds in the fragments that are preserved of Solon's writings and of other earlier writers. He tells us that what is natural is best and that the deed done without the deity is best left unspoken (Olym. IX), and again (Nem. I) that each of us has his special power and we must earnestly endeavour according as Nature shows the way. This is to be the moral of our action, while that of our thought is that man is as nothing (Nem. VI), ephemeral creature naught knowing what he is or what he may be, nothing but a mirage-dream (Pyth. VIII).

Under the spell of such stern teaching as this it is no wonder that Pheidias was not employed, as was Michael Angelo, in depicting for an inquiring posterity the outer husk of the protagonist of his day. Nor was it merely when he was called on to decorate Athens with his accomplished powers that Pheidias found guiding principles of this stern sort, but even in his other great work, the Olympian Zeus, he was governed in the same way. By the Greek, victory in the games was no more to be aspired to without the help of the Gods than was victory in battle, and it was not praise for the winner but gratitude to the Gods that was mete when Nike laid the 'golden crown' upon the athlete's brow. For it is the Gods who, as Pindar sings, guard the deep-breasted plain of Sparta and grant success in the great games. Fame is to be sought but it is to be the fame of honourable deeds (Pyth. VIII), but even this is of less value than happiness and only he who has won both has attained the acme of bliss (Pyth. I). Such men are almost unknown, for the soul of honour is tarnished by lust of gain (Nem. IX). Thus were the athletes

in that "age of heroic prize-men" taught that physical power was of value, but only as it was a stepping-stone to moral purity. No portraits of such youths as these unless the Gods marked them as their own with the triple crown. The deep-delled researches of epigraphist and excavator show us how rare was that event.

Called upon to embody for the chosen youth of Greece their idea and image of the guardian deity who meted out unquestioned justice to their strife, Pheidias had to depict as it were a masculine counterpart to the Goddess who made Athens her own. That he was as successful in the one task as in the other is instantly apparent to one who notes the quality of the praise bestowed upon his work by the highly trained critics of the classic period. None speak of his figures as they do of Myron's, for instance, as deceiving the beholder by their realism. There is no question as to the mastery over the material as with Kalamis and Pythagoras, — no suggestion of conventionalism as with Polykleitos, none of overrefinement as with Praxiteles, — but all agree that his works were such nobly adequate representations of the divine beings that they added a new glory to the religion of which they were the perfected expression.

Still another noteworthy peculiarity of this religion in its effect on his work remains to be mentioned. Both he and Michael Angelo had at different times now mere mortals, now deities, to represent. In the case of the Attic master this led to a greater unity of performance than was possible with the Florentine. Between the dwellers on Olympus and those on the broad-bosomed Earth there was to Pheidias's mind only a difference in degree, whereas to the believer in the Roman

doctrines there was no real similarity between the heavenly hosts and the inhabitants of this vale of tears; and where such was suggested, it was so as a symbol, not as a representation. To the Greek the Gods were merely his grander, nobler, more powerful brethren, blessed with the same virtues and troubled by similar faults, differing principally from the dwellers on earth by usually escaping the results due to giving way to passion. Even they were not blessed with absolute immunity and freedom of action. Zeus himself was subject to Fate, but in the main the Gods, at least in their outward form, were but more beautiful men and women. Hence when called upon to carve the most noble being whom he could imagine, and equally when carving ideal youths and maidens on the Parthenon, he could only carve the same forms he saw about him every day idealised by his imagination. Whichever branch of his art he followed trained him for the other.

That such conditions and beliefs as these were very different from those under which Michael Angelo had to work needs no elaborate exposition. How different they were in their effect on the art of Pheidias and the happiness of the period for such an artist becomes clearer the more one studies. There is still another point to consider, however, — what might be called a more practical one than the influences of religion, and in this regard, too, Pheidias was the more favoured. I refer to the political conditions of the time, and the relations of Pheidias to his employers.

The lack of original documents makes it impossible for us to follow the course led by Pheidias from its fortunate rise to its unhappy close, but that in most ways he was much to be envied by Michael Angelo cannot be questioned. Athens



was at the height of her prosperity; freed from foreign or internal foes, she was at liberty to pursue her ends as occasion demanded or as consideration showed was best. It was a time of thanksgiving and hope. No such condition of government as this was known to Michael Angelo, nor did his country have the advantage of being led by as high-minded a statesman, and probably as wise a one, as ever lived. So long as Pericles was leader of the state, Pheidias was his friend and helper. Here was no worry for the artist, no change of master, no blighting of cherished hopes, all which ills were suffered by Michael Angelo; on the contrary, existence in the midst of a most highly cultivated community — a community moved by a common search after ideal ends, a community which must have been a constant inspiration to the sculptor to equal the expectations it had of him. With the rise of mob rule brought on by the momentary successes won by certain demagogues came the downfall of Pericles and in his train Pheidias. But his great work was finished then. He had nothing to fear when he laid aside his chisel, and fortunately he was not left long to mourn the fast vanishing nobility of his city and race. The time of calm self-confidence had passed and the time of trouble was threatening. Only a short time elapsed before the tide of disaster engulfed the whole country, and if we would seek a counterpart to the worn and restless spirit that sometimes appears in Michael Angelo's work, we can find it in the later Greek masters — even Praxiteles shows traces of it. But it is not mere likenesses we are in search of, so much as explanations and the clarification of certain phenomena of art.

The effect of these conditions of life and thought on Pheidias



was more strong than on other sculptors of the time because the greater sensitiveness and impressibility of his nature rendered him a more encompassing recipient for ideas and feelings than most of his contemporaries. But the qualities that show in his work with especial sharpness are found diffused throughout all the work of the period, and there is one very noticeable characteristic of this work which distinguishes it markedly from the work produced by Michael Angelo's fellow-workmen. It is the emphasis laid on youth. Donatello, Verrocchio, Desiderio and many others often represented youthful figures; but the representation of youth and early manhood could scarcely be said to distinguish the work of the Florentine from other epochs, yet this is exactly what can be said of the product of the early Greek and particularly the Attic School.

Look at the statues of youths and maidens, the never-fading ghosts of past days, which the Attic chisel carved and the Attic soil has preserved for us. Look at the young Apollos and their not less glorious brethren, the athletes. Look at the guardians above the temple porches — incarnations of youthful vigour even when the bearded head or matronly form give sign of elder years. Look at the vases "with brede of marble men and maidens overwrought." Finally look well at the statues of God and Goddess — even these have youth eternal moulded in their full, strong figures.

And it is pleasant to reflect that it is not the sculptor's art alone which found satisfaction in thus dwelling on the most beautiful forms of human life, but the painters and the poets too immortalise the entrancing splendours of the youthful form. Greek art of this time presents us with the indubitable evidence of a belief, rooted deep as life itself,

that the everlasting joy of completest beauty was to be found in the well-conditioned body of youth or maiden. What a degradation the ascetic interpretation of the Holy Writ brought in the art of the Renaissance! Many youthful figures do we find there, but they were chosen as much for the sake of the quaintness of extremely youthful forms as for the beauty inherent in vigorous development. The place of the fine-drawn, well-groomed figures of the Greek youths and maidens is taken by jolly, pot-bellied babies. Over the altars and among the graves they scramble, and up the marble columns, to launch themselves, heedless as screaming swallows, over the groined ceiling. From North to South and across Italy from Sea to Sea this breed of fascinating babies spread — their father the Church, their mother the great human heart of the Italian race. And then, dulling the pleasant impression that such figures make upon the mind, we are met on all sides by haggard figures of men and women expressive only of a bitter ardour to seek salvation by pain.

The wanness of Botticelli, the pain and trouble of Michael Angelo, the mere ordinarily healthy look of Ghirlandaio, these are what take the place of the deep-breasted, broad-shouldered, strong-pulsed, magnificent Greeks — some repetition among these latter, 'tis true, but marvellous in their vigour and constancy and impulsiveness. Or what poets can the Medicean time show who sing of ideals and principles in the same full-throated, calm, incisive way as Pindar or Sophocles sang them? We have instead a scornful wrath or playful fancy. The deity is no longer friendly but terrible, and dainty mistresses usurp the place of the God-compelling Aphrodite. The momentary, not the eternal, is the interest of the day.



PLATE LV.



Some there were, Greek in spirit and in deed: Dante in part of his later work, so far as a Catholic could be. The *Vita Nuova* in its heart-broken passion, the *Convito* in its complexity, are purely Italian, but passages of the *Divine Comedy* and the *Letters* might be the work of one of the Attic dramatists, so intense are they, so cool, so assertive of the power of right over wrong. But an artist much more Greek than Dante and one who is often, but very mistakenly, thought to resemble Michael Angelo, was Tintoretto. His was a Greek sense of form, his was a Greek sense of beauty, and his was a completely and absolutely Greek sense of what constituted true portraiture. There were others too of this group, but they are rare and far between; men who seem to have been born two thousand years too late, or else just in time to save the world from a worship of what was mentally warped and physically unsound.

When one considers that the art of sculpture has found its chief employment in the service of religion, it becomes plain why living among a people whose religion led to asceticism, even though the age was largely sceptical, Michael Angelo should impress his work with a feeling quite opposed to that found in the works of Pheidias. Scepticism there was in ancient Greece too, but not strong enough to free Pheidias entirely from the bonds of the religion to which he was from infancy accustomed. Furthermore, a scepticism that found much fuel for its flames in the misconduct of the Vicar of Christ and his less powerful imitators would have a very dissimilar effect on the mind from that which was based on true mental development. The one was the natural sloughing of the skin, the other the amputation of a diseased member.



The conditions at Rome had more effect on the formation of character in those days than anything else, and they cannot have seemed much less rotten to Michael Angelo than to Hildebrand five hundred years earlier. The feeling that Christ was essentially the man of sorrows, which affected the early artists, had passed from men's minds, and in regard to his comeliness there was nothing to prevent an artist working in a Greek spirit; but employed though Michael Angelo was by the Popes, they used him by no means always on religious work.

And Michael Angelo also suffered, as Pheidias did not, from having many masters. These were causes to destroy any Pheidian-like unity in Michael Angelo's work, but causes much more potent to work him injury were the characters of the men for whom he worked, prince as well as Pope. It was, doubtless, in many respects fortunate for a young artist to have the freedom of the court of Lorenzo de' Medici, but while Lorenzo might help such a man as Michael Angelo at the beginning of his career, he was hardly the man to inspire his more mature years. At any rate he died while Michael Angelo was still young, and thenceforth the latter worked for men with whom he can have had but little sympathy. Men of great energy they were, but with the exception of Alexander VI, in the main corrupt or stupid. To work for such men under any circumstances must have been trying, but when one thinks of their refusal to allow Michael Angelo to work as he saw fit, one does not wonder that at times he was nervously irritable.

Obviously such a life would have been trying to a man of more ordinary clay than Michael Angelo, but to him, endowed,



as he was, with enormous powers of mental application and sensitive as only poets are, it must at times have been little less than torture. He knew that the golden age of his country had passed. He saw Florence humbled and Rome sacked. The statesmen were men of mean ambition and the clergy men of lax morals. Nothing could stop the degeneration. Political reformers and saintly enthusiasts had matched themselves against the ever-increasing debasement of Italy, and one after another they had all been overcome. From the days of the doubtful reforms of Crescentius or Cola da Rienzi through the period of the passionate recalling of Christ by Francis of Assisi to the time of bitter invective of Savonarola, reformers had given their lives in the attempt to save their beloved Italy from the error of her ways, and all had failed. It was not a time for hope but for sorrow, and it needed a firm belief in the Divine Word to save one from despair — or at least discontent.

It is from his sonnets and letters rather than from his sculpture that we can obtain a view of Michael Angelo's thoughts and feelings. Not that the latter does not show certain moods of the artist very clearly, but, as in the *Pietà*, it is more ideal than personal, more the expression of dreams than of his actual experience. In the sonnets, on the other hand, he gives vent to his own innermost feelings. In them we find frequent expression of deep despair, but bitterly as he grieved for the death of Savonarola, there is no evidence that he thereat lost faith in humanity. It may well have been his admiration of Vittoria Colonna that saved him from misanthropy. As his intercourse with her was undoubtedly the purest joy and her death the keenest sorrow of his later years, so there may have

been some similarly sweetening influence during the summer of his life. The knowledge of his career that we possess is great, but it does not tell us this. It is for our purposes, perhaps for all, better that this should be so. At least it makes it easier to compare him with Pheidias, of whose life we have no such details whatever.

Such were some of the general conditions affecting the point of view of these two men. The effect they had on particular work becomes evident with the study of the separate monuments. One point is, to begin with, very noticeable. It is that of the eight works by Pheidias mentioned distinctly by ancient writers seven are representations of deities, and the eighth of an ideal being. There can be no question that he made other works, but that these alone were preserved by tradition certainly affords safe grounds for the deduction that his genius was most congenially employed and most fully displayed in such work. In the case of Michael Angelo, while we know of work like the statue of Julius or the Battle Cartoon (not to mention his youthful efforts) that have nothing to do with religion, yet his mind also turned to religious subjects and his greatest works are entirely of this character.

Curiously enough it is when employed on subjects drawn from the ancient world that Michael Angelo is most unlike the great Greek. His *Pietà*, the Madonna of Bruges (Plate LIII) and Victor (Plate LIV) are more Pheidian than his Bacchus (National Museum, Florence; Plate LV) or his Eros (South Kensington Museum; Plate LVI). These are Greek of a kind, but they are Alexandrian rather than Pheidian. They are as foreign to any conceptions of the fifth century as they are to those of the Catholic Church. The drunken,

tottering Bacchus is as different from the early conception of the God, who was thought of almost more as the sunshine that makes the grape than as the juice itself, as the shrinking and self-conscious Venus of the Capitol is from the Venus of Cnidos. In his sensuality the Bacchus is un-Pheidian and in the humour introduced in the group by the presence of his companion he is equally so. Humour was not lacking to the Athenian, as the drama shows, but the fields of sculpture and painting were not considered the proper place for its display.

In still another point is the statue of Bacchus comparable not to the early but to the late Greek work, and that is in the realism of the modelling and the action of the figure. Such modelling bears no relation to the broad treatment of Pheidias. The latter shows no such *morbidezza*, nor would he have dwelt on the repulsive unsteadiness of the pose. Whoever it was that carved the famous Borghese Anacreon, and it was some contemporary of Pheidias, shows us how the earlier Greek artist felt towards drunkenness. The figure is under the influence of his much-sung God Dionysos, but he is shown in attitude of mental ecstasy not of physical uncontrol. What stamps the Bacchus and the Eros (and much of his other work) as non-Greek is a lack not exactly of beauty, but of delicacy and refinement, of charm. But each of these characteristics that differentiates Michael Angelo's work from that of the Greek stamps it as a work of the Renaissance. The pleasure in technical excellence, the realism and the representation of unpleasantness are all qualities that recur over and over again in the work of this vigorous, capable, unflinching, unbelieving period.

Similar un-Pheidian qualities show in the figure of Eros in London, which if not by Michael Angelo, is at least made entirely in his spirit. The same realism of modelling is seen in the treatment of the head and face, the same choice of an action inexpressive of the deepest meaning of the figure. It is still less Pheidian in the vividness and intentness of the action and expression which are not explained by the figure itself, but the meaning of which is left to the imagination of the beholder to discover. Dramatic quality of this sort is rarely found in Pheidian work. The statues carved in that time were self-explanatory. Single figures were often represented as intent or as full of movement as the Eros, but their action is not motivated by something outside themselves. Hence they do not puzzle the beholder. The Anacreon, the Discobolus need no explanation, but Michael Angelo's Eros needs to be grouped (at least in imagination) with some other figure before it can be understood. It is like Myron's Marsyas, splendid and suggestive but incomplete.<sup>1</sup> Separate figures of the Parthenon pediments are as dramatic as the Eros, but then they form part of a group and as such their meaning was perfectly clear.

An instance is found in one of the group of Gods on the eastern end of the frieze of the Parthenon (Plate LVII). The figure is commonly called Ares. He is seated forward on his throne, and holds one raised knee between his clasped hands. Such an attitude, so lacking in grandeur, so suggestive of restlessness, is well suited to the fiery God of Battles and shows how free and ungoverned by conventions Pheidias could be.

<sup>1</sup> The recent discovery of a life-size marble copy of the Athena of the Marsyas group has made Myron's character much clearer than before. See Pollak in the *Jahresheften des Oesterreichischen Archaeologischen Institutes*, 1909, p. 154.





PLATE LVI.





The group as a whole is a perfect expression of the power of the master, to be simple as a child in this treatment of the Olympians and yet never to fail to produce work of supreme beauty.

This simplicity one notices in all Pheidian work, separating it sharply from the later work in Greece and from most of the work in Italy, particularly from that of Michael Angelo. Pheidias is not in the least affected, but at the same time he is not actualistic. Of the hundreds of figures in the full round and in relief that decorated the Parthenon there is not one, nor even a group, that does not seem absolutely and utterly simple and real. And yet there is not one of them which close study does not reveal to be a marvellous composite of actions and forms and draperies and expressions which all bear the stamp of idealisation (Plate LVIII). The effect of perfection that the work conveys is due perhaps to Pheidias not having tried to idealise in any vague or artificial way, but to his combining an absolute dependence on Nature for his models with a capacity of seeing, and solely representing, their essential beauties. So while his figures are ideal in the sense that they are more perfect than average mortals, yet they do not seem unapproachable and unaccountable.

Now this, we may freely grant, cannot be said of Michael Angelo's work. His figures are simple, yet it is not the simplicity of Nature but of Art. A passing glance may find them equal to the Pheidian works, but a more careful study shows that though true to Nature and possible in action, they are, in respect to both body and attitude, improbable. They are composed, and hence in a way untrue. The Pheidian beings seem those of the Golden Age — perfect and unconcerned ;

while the others oftentimes seem interested in their own perfection and desirous that it should be admired. One knows enough of Michael Angelo to know that though self-conscious, such thoughts were far from his mind and if, as I think, they are to be seen in his work, it only shows that the time was stronger than the man, for he lived in a period when affectation was not uncommon. The grandeur of the Greek figures, as manifest in figurines as in colossal works, is due to the beauty dependent on a mental poise; that of the Florentine figures is due to their size and suggestion of physical strength and to their facial and bodily expression that imply the capacity of untold depths of passion — quite as physical a consideration as that of size.

Of course it may be said that the Eros is merely a study of the human frame in a rather complicated position, but even so, my contention that the figure is un-Pheidian still remains true.

The strength of the action exhibited by this figure of Eros, the tremendous play of muscle while at the same time the figure is thought of not as in motion but as at rest, is what one finds in very many figures painted and carved by Michael Angelo and forms one of the most distinctive characteristics of his work. It shows in the Slaves, in the Medici figures, in some of the sacred groups, in lesser measure but yet distinctly in the David and Moses, and as clearly as possible in the paintings of the Sistine Chapel. It is due to this in large degree that these works are so well known, for they strike the eye of the casual and impatient sightseer and they are remembered with much greater vividness than work of a quieter and less excited character. In the hands of a genius like

Michael Angelo such treatment of the human figure, and the choice of such positions, seem natural and give no sense of exaggeration or restlessness.

It is commonly held that genius is limited by no law, and in so far as is meant thereby to imply that no bounds can be set to the concepts of great minds, this is true; in the attempt to express such concepts to others, however, the genius equally with less endowed mortals must be limited by the laws that govern the material in which he seeks to find expression. The penetration of a Sophocles or a Shakespeare into the mysteries of life can have no measure set to it, but when they tell us their thoughts, their words are bound by the laws of verse. No final explanation can be given for the teeming imagination of Michael Angelo, but some of his works may be criticised for not conforming to the laws of space or material that govern the arts of painting and sculpture. He sometimes shows a lack of *taste*.

Genius shows in every touch of Michael Angelo's hand, whether with brush or chisel, but at times his work is unsatisfactory owing to its exaggeration. No admiration is too great for specific qualities in everything he did, but it is clear that the conception of beauty was not held by him as essential. To Pheidias, on the other hand, it was of primal importance.

A comparison of the Parthenon pediments with the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel may make clear my meaning. This is not the place for fine analysis of either composition. Suffice it to say that in each case the space has been filled by the decoration with a perfection and adequacy that has never been again approached, but I think it will be generally ad-

mitted that the chief impression of the pediments, shattered though they are, is of beauty, while that of the ceiling is of power. Michael Angelo tried at times to express in paint and stone what cannot be clearly expressed in those substances. This was what I have referred to as lack of taste. His *Last Judgment* is a striking case in point. He attempted in that work to do what Milton or Dante succeeded in doing better with more suitable means. Even the Chief Actor in the scene lacked the quality of grandeur which Michael Angelo seems usually to have found no difficulty in suggesting. It is perhaps because he felt the inadequacy of stone or paint for the full expression of his ideas that he left so many works uncompleted.

Michael Angelo's figures of Night and Dawn and certain figures in the Sistine Chapel may be criticised for the exaggeration of their pose, though how extraordinarily successful they are can be seen by comparing them with similar figures by Vasari or other imitators of the master, which invariably appear to be insecure and in danger of falling. The difference in the kind of imitators who followed Pheidias, and those who succeeded Michael Angelo, shows well one difference in their genius and the effect on art in general that the two men had.

Both men had numerous pupils and followers, but in the earlier time such men served to keep Greek sculpture at its highest level, in the later they brought on a rapid degradation of the art in Italy. The reason for this different result is plain. Just as most people now see nothing in Michael Angelo's work but strongly modelled figures and vigorous poses, not knowing enough of his life to comprehend what were the thoughts he desired to express, so the artists in his



own day thought the magnificence of his work lay in its exterior form. Imitating this they succeeded in producing only figures with unnaturally protuberant muscles placed in uncomfortably contorted positions. Vasari and Bandinelli are two instances in point. The painted figures of the former are as foolish in their assertion of would-be grandeur as is possible to conceive, and there are few things uglier or coarser than the group of Hercules and Cacus by the latter.

In Michael Angelo this insistence on the muscular development of figures is an accident perhaps due to his delight (a pure Greek delight) in mere physical strength, such as he himself possessed, but it is not the most telling characteristic of his work. The truly essential part of his work is the thought which his figures embody. His followers, being men of little originality, as is shown by their trying to assume his peculiarities, naturally succeeded not in making work like his, but work which in reality serves to show their dissimilarity to their master. It was unfortunate, also, that the very qualities which attracted them were of a nature that if misunderstood lead to a more rapid debasement of art and life than almost any other, for a love of mere physical strength is a love of what allies one to the beasts of the field. Their work unites them not so much to Michael Angelo as to the maker of what (with the exception of the Laocoon) is probably the ugliest and most brutal work preserved to us from antiquity — the Farnese Hercules.

All this was very different in the case of Pheidias and his school. In his work there was nothing superficial to catch the eye, no peculiarity except the perfection and beauty that one feels instantly and yet cannot, without much care,

explain on what it depends. What was there then for other artists to do if they felt his was perfect sculpture and they desired to work towards it? His figures were calm and stately. His greatness lay in his conception of the being he was called upon to represent — in his point of view, that is. This showed itself not in a technical skill superior to that of his fellow-workers, for the artists then as in the Renaissance were in the main equally skilful, but in a mass of infinitesimal details which not so much by themselves separately as by their combination gave his work its everlasting charm. It would not have taken a quick-witted Greek long to realise that to produce Pheidian works he must look at life in a Pheidian way, and the more successful his imitations the more calm, restrained and careful would they be. This Pheidian point of view was such that his followers were turned toward spiritual repose as the source of inspiration for their works rather than toward restless activity.

The complexity of the attitudes of Michael Angelo's figures is scarcely more noticeable than the multiplicity of the subjects he was called upon to produce. Life was more complicated in his day than in that of Pheidias, and there were more varied demands made upon the artist than in the ancient times. While Pheidias, so far as we know, had to make works solely for the state or for some public purpose, Michael Angelo was forced to gratify the whim of various powerful employers. Oftentimes such work, as for instance the Sistine Chapel, was of public character, but more often it was not, so that in place of striving to embody the ideals of the state whose greatest artist he was, he had to bend and mould his genius to satisfy the personal ambitions of his masters. The story of the





PLATE LVII.



Julian tomb illustrates this sad and thwarted part of his career. Not only was he prevented from carrying out work already undertaken in the way which he considered best, but also he was forced to do that for which he felt himself unprepared by previous training and unfitted by lack of interest in the subject.

That this was his mood at the time when, notwithstanding his arguments, Pope Julius II compelled him, in 1508, to begin the work in the Sistine Chapel, is known. If, when working against his will, he produced the most wonderful bit of decorative and architectural painting the world knows, one can but wonder what limit his talent would have reached had he ever carried to completion any of his great sculptural undertakings. Just as his capacity for mingling in his figures deep thought and powerful action shows not a greater but rather a more varied genius than that of Pheidias, so his capacities as painter, as architect, as engineer show that circumstances led him to much greater variety of activity than probably any ancient artist ever experienced. Not that this varied activity must needs imply the possession of greater powers. It implies merely the capacity of using an intellect highly trained in one way for the accomplishment of purposes of more than one kind. That is, it implies the possession by the artist of adaptability and of common sense in its finest form, and the possession of these qualities was not a rare characteristic in the Renaissance. Men of all kinds showed it, but it is most marked when it appears as part of the mental outfit of painters and of sculptors, men who too often adopt a pose of what they consider simplicity and lack of knowledge of the world, as though ignorance were the stepping-stone to great

art. This was not the condition of things in the Renaissance, nor, so far as the little evidence we have allows us to judge, in Greece. It created no surprise when Van Eyck and Rubens were considered as proper persons to be entrusted with affairs of state, nor when the military protection of his city was put into the hands of Michael Angelo, nor when Leonardo laid out the irrigation system of Lombardy. Life is more complicated now and in many lines work has to be more specialised — but this is no reason why artists should be stupid.

The fact that the talents required for painting and sculpture are not incompatible is clearly shown by Michael Angelo's works. The most common criticism passed on them, and one that is in part true, is that his sculptures are at times too pictorial while at others his paintings are too sculptural. Certain it is that parts of the ceiling in the Sistine Chapel look, at first sight, more like sculptured figures than like painted decorations. Michael Angelo was unquestionably aware of this, and the effect was intentionally sought by him. To state as a rule of art that work on the flat should always look flat is a mistake. There is no law of optics or of architecture which demands this.

The application of the laws of art must depend on the individual practitioner.<sup>1</sup> In treating the figures in the Sistine Chapel in a sculpturesque way Michael Angelo produced a work more like the Parthenon in the perfection with which the decoration is adapted to its position than is elsewhere to

<sup>1</sup> The modern theory that wall paintings should be flat, that they should not give the impression of an opening beyond the wall they are on, is contradicted by all the practice of the Renaissance. Lippi, Gozzoli, Leonardo, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Veronese, Correggio, to recall but a few, all used wall painting as a means of suggesting larger dimensions and more ample space than the rooms they decorated actually afforded.





PLATE LVIII.





be seen. He has used painting, that is to say, in much of his design to suggest sculpture, which is the richer and more suitable adjunct to most parts of architecture,<sup>1</sup> and thereby produced a complex architectural work instead of producing merely a painting which, like many of those in Venice, might equally well be placed anywhere else.

A comparison will make the point plain. Take most modern decoration of a similar sort and how infinitely feeble and accidental it seems! Look at the decorations of the Pantheon in Paris, of the Boston Public Library, and the difference may be seen. Great painting one may see there, but not great decoration of architectural works; and ceiling or wall paintings are nothing else. Any one of these paintings taken from its present position would look equally well on any other wall large enough to hold it, or in any gallery, and would also have equal meaning there. Not so Michael Angelo's work. As a whole it could be put nowhere except where it is, and if cut in pieces each bit would cry out in its solitude and demand the juxtaposition of the other parts. The work is as perfect a finishing of the Chapel as though it were some natural growth. This is equally true of the sculptures of the Parthenon. How inconsequent and unmeaning they look when taken from their natural place is shown in the British Museum by the Atheneum Club and Hyde Park Gate in London.

Michael Angelo's other paintings also have a sculptural look. This is partly due to the fact that the foreground, where atmosphere has little effect, is more studied than the background. To him as to Pheidias the human figure was

<sup>1</sup> To illustrate by an example: the low relief work of the Tempietto at Rimini is a more perfect form of decoration (partly because of its permanency) than painting would have been.

of the deepest interest, but its natural surroundings of little or none, so the figures are drawn with a distinctness and illumined with an intensity of light which make them look more solid and material than many a painter's work. It does not mean that Michael Angelo failed to understand the function of painting as a Fine Art. The true function of art is the presentation of the ideal and this is done by the translation of emotion. This translation of emotion, when accomplished with the motive of giving pleasure by pleasing the senses or elevating the mind, produces the noblest art, for this search for pleasure is in healthy minds but the search for beauty, and beauty is the suggestion of the ideal. This being the general function of Art each one of the Fine Arts follows in ways individual to itself the search after beauty in the translation of emotion. Music is the most subtle and architecture is the most general of the arts, and poetry the most commonly understood, while painting and sculpture, the terms of which are hardest to define, are the most closely related. As an art architecture is an expression of man as a social animal. Painting and sculpture are its proper adjuncts. Painting ought to be merely the representation by colour of three dimensional spaces in two dimensions, while sculpture should attempt nothing but the rendering of forms in full or partial relief. Each art *per se* has special powers, but when used as a detail of work of another kind, its peculiarities must then be suppressed till it is in accord with the work of which it is a portion or detail.

Now this is exactly what Michael Angelo accomplished. It is natural for painting, since it cannot represent figures in the round, to lay most emphasis on the face, but when it is used

to ornament the separate parts of an architectural work, it must generalise its own peculiarities and use them to enrich the architectural scheme. For in so far as painting thus used impresses the beholder with its excellence as painting, by just so far has the architecture become a frame for the painting and the painting failed to be a glory added to the architecture. Michael Angelo was a great enough genius to be able to use painting perfectly as an additional splendour to his architecture.

You do not think of the figures or pictures on the Sistine ceiling as separate works — in large measure the composition is such that you cannot — so much as the finishing ornament of the Chapel. This is because the artist did not put the greatest amount of expression into the faces, it permeates equally the whole body. Thus these grand creatures look like sculpture, which is in fact, as more similar in its permanence to architecture, the noblest means of decorating a building. Ceilings cannot, it is true, be covered with carved figures, and great care should be chosen in the scenes depicted on them, for they do not offer a suitable position in which to hang pictures that are primarily conceived as pictures. This was a common mistake of the Venetians, who covered the ceilings of the Ducal Palace, Santa Maria del' Orto and countless other buildings with elaborate paintings of subjects that have no architectural significance and cannot be thought of as scenes taking place in the heavens. They are in fact large easel pictures and as such would be better seen if hung upright on the wall than in their present position.

In the Sistine Chapel Michael Angelo showed his complete understanding of painting as an ornament and finish to ar-

chitecture, and in his easel paintings he manifests, if not as complex effects as some painters, at least as full a knowledge of what constitutes painting, from its roots of drawing and composition to the full blossom of colour and expression. Perhaps the most marked peculiarity of his paintings is the lack of complex backgrounds of any sort, whether of landscape, or drapery, or architecture. This again allies him to the Greeks, not to those of any one age in especial, but to all, for the most marked difference (leaving the less important matters of medium and technique aside) between their paintings and those of modern times is, that they did not consider backgrounds as a part to be treated with much elaboration or care.

The Greek painter, we know, presented his scene with only enough suggestion of the surroundings in which the figures stood for the beholder to understand the general character of the spot where the action was taking place. He lavished his care on the figures, and did nothing to distract the full attention of the beholder from them. Michael Angelo did the same. In so far as he rivets your whole attention to the figures on the canvas, his painting is sculpturesque, but this word cannot be applied to his work in the sense that he was ignorant of the principles of painting as an art of expression. That in his painting as in his sculpture he tended to overstep what are generally considered the proper limits of the art is true, but this was due rather to great knowledge than to any imperfect understanding. At such times he was striking out into the unknown realms of discovery and searching for new possibilities for the arts of which he was the most accomplished master of the time.





PLATE LIX.





I have tried to show how the general beliefs and ideals of the people among whom they lived would have tended to differentiate these two artists one from the other in certain ways and to ally them in certain others. But different or similar, can it be said of either: this one is the greater? I think not, even though one recognises that Michael Angelo certainly gave more varied expression to his genius. Neither of them shows a more complete understanding of the arts, or embodies a fuller realisation of the ideal in his figures, than the other.

Take for example Pheidias's statues of Athena and Michael Angelo's of the Madonna. No artist could express all each of these beings suggests in one figure, but it would be a hard task to find anything that they did not show in one or the other of their several presentations. We know with considerable accuracy what was the grandeur of the Athena Parthenos, the guardian of her chosen people, and we also know the divine rage felt by Athena the warrior Goddess driving Poseidon from the sacred citadel; and finally we know by literary and probably by ocular evidence with what consummate grace Pheidias represented Athena the ideal of Attic maidenhood. There are many other statues of the Goddess by other artists and from other periods but none I believe that add to the realisation these three give us of what Athena was to the Athenians.

In the same way Michael Angelo shows us the feeling of his time towards the Virgin. In the figure at Bruges we see the youthful figure — the Virgin of the Visitation. In the partially finished group in Florence there is more trouble in the face, the feeling expressed in the words "behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" and "they under-

stood not the saying that he spake unto them" (Plate LIX). In the Pietà in St. Peter's her heart is numb with grief — the flood of sorrow that has whelmed her is

"Such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound or foam,  
When that which draws from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home."

Her figure as shown us by other lesser men seems trivial or incomplete when these are remembered.

If one considers the larger undertakings of the two men, the Parthenon and the Sistine Chapel, one cannot say that either surpasses the other, though one can say with absolute security that neither has ever been approached. In these works they show themselves the masters of all craftsmen. Note the way in which the composition of the Parthenon groups suits the long, low triangular space in which they are placed, each group, taken as a whole, being made up of numerous lesser groups which are quite perfect by themselves and so interwoven by means of upraised arms or turned bodies or bits of floating drapery, that it is only after careful observation that one sees how the artist made various parts unite into one perfect whole. It is the acme of architectural sculpture. It seems simple, but one searches in vain among the pediment groups that have been made since for one that can approach it even distantly in merit. It is this same intertwining of simple, unforced separate parts into one grand, living completeness that marks out the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel as a thing apart and unequalled.

To compare the more private, perhaps more personal works, of the two men is impossible, for the reason that nothing of

this sort made by Pheidias has been preserved for us. There are a few such by Michael Angelo, some from his earliest years, as the *Battle of the Centaurs*, others like the *David* or perhaps the *Eros*. From these we get a suggestion regarding the ideas which Michael Angelo thought were to be expressed by sculpture. The bas-relief showing the *Battle of the Centaurs* can, however, scarcely be taken into consideration, for it is a work of his mere boyhood and shows little except unusual power for a youth and an interest, which apparently did not last, in subjects drawn from ancient art. The man's unconventional and powerful nature is shown by the fact that in his mature years he did not ever, as most contemporary painters and sculptors did, try to copy the antique in any way. His own mind was too active for him to adopt either the subjects or modes of other men's work. So, too, in the case of Pheidias, his work does not suggest that of any predecessor, but in later periods of Greek sculpture the figures which hark back in some way to Pheidian originals are innumerable.

In the *David*, in the figures in the *Medici Chapel* and those for the *Julian tomb* one sees the same strained look: physical calm and great strength combined with a marked expression of mental restlessness and trouble, undoubtedly significant of Michael Angelo's own feeling of weariness and of the 'powerful trouble' that beset the world. Pheidias came just at the acme of a great period. Michael Angelo, on the other hand, felt that the light in the sky was that of the waning day, not of the sunrise. His figures are sad; those by Pheidias are quiet and peaceful. Society and the artist were in harmony in the case of the Greek; they were not in accord in the case of the Florentine.

Every point we study brings us to the same conclusion, that while each of these men was the supreme master of his time and of incomparable capacity, Pheidias had less to struggle against than Michael Angelo; and through being able to carry out his ideas unhampered, he had a better effect on his followers than Michael Angelo, whose works are in the main monuments of thwarted purpose. Each sought unceasingly to embody in his work ideals of beauty beyond the influence of contemporary events. In the one case this was possible, in the other not. To the Greek, contemporaneity was nothing, to the Italian, it was all. Where Pheidias was called on to decorate the chief public building of Athens with scenes of war which were known only by popular tradition and which were instinct with poetry, Michael Angelo had to depict a battle that was a mere incident of border warfare. Each of these men, however, enriched the world with works that are unsurpassed, and similar work will never again be accomplished.

With the passing of the Greek world passed the ideals that inspired Pheidias. Others came and faded away again with Michael Angelo. Their works are immortal in the sense that in their kind they cannot be superseded. But the arts themselves are not immortal, for this would mean that they could not advance and develop. It is in this power of growth and change and adaptation that art is allied to science, and we turn to the most recent exponent of either with the incommensurable hope that he may have found the master key to beautiful new worlds.



### III. A HEAD OF ATHENA FROM CYRENE

IN the first, and, as it was destined to be, the last report on the excavations by the Archæological Institute of America at Cyrene,<sup>1</sup> I published a marble head of Athena which we found a few inches below the surface on the top of the Acropolis.

The spot where it was found afforded no clew to its origin. It came to light in a small room constructed probably in the later Ptolemaic times, and had obviously fallen and been lost to sight, by one of those inexplicable accidents familiar to all excavators, on the spot where our picks discovered it. No temple stood near; no trace of pedestal could be found and no other fragment of marble came from the torn covering of protecting earth to help answer the eager questioning the quiet face aroused. Except for a flake off the hair, the tip of the helmet projecting over the brow, the edge of one ear and the point of the nose, the marble was as fresh as the day the figure was first unveiled to the worshipping multitude. (Plates LX, LXI.)

The perfect head alone is left us to solve the riddles the archæologist and artist may ask. Doubtless when in the oncoming years the Italians have the satisfaction of finishing the work which we inaugurated and made possible, further discoveries will dispel whatever doubts now harass our minds,

<sup>1</sup> In the *Bulletin of the Archæological Institute of America*, Vol. II (1910-11), Plates 47 and 79, and p. 162.

and students, forgetful of the time and circumstances under which we wrought, will wonder why we hesitated, why we did not see, why the closed lips did not speak to us with as clear a note as to them. Doubtless, but still it seems likely that many years must elapse before others will be able to finish our work, and in the meantime it is well to bring this lovely bit of sculptor's art more adequately to the attention of students than seemed wise before the hope of continuing the excavation was blighted by the careless hand of war.

Before studying the special characteristics of this head of Athena and showing how, notwithstanding the very numerous representations of the warrior Goddess which we possess, it is entirely individual and unlike any other, we may do well to recall certain facts regarding Cyrene as a centre of Greek life and thought, facts that are not open to question, being proved by historical and other positive evidence. The accounts given by the ancient historians and poets of the foundation and rapid rise to wealth of Cyrene were sufficient to make us certain that the archæologist's spade would find in plenty those beautiful monuments of a long-since vanished spirit which make the work of the excavator on Greek soil so entrancing and satisfying.

Even at inaccessible Cyrene, however, we were not the first. In the early sixties of the last century, Smith and Porcher, two fine examples of men of English breadth of view combined with well-trained and persistent capacity, had brought to light a considerable number of bits of sculpture which showed clearly that Cyrene, like every other Greek city, had once been a kindly nurse to artists. True though it be that these broken fragments now sheltered in the



PLATE LX.



British Museum were, with the exception of a magnificent bronze head, of second-rate quality, still they dispelled all doubt regarding one very important point; that is, they showed that at Cyrene itself there were large numbers of sculptors whose technical skill was of a high order. That there were numerous sculptors was proved by the fact that the works found by Smith and Porcher embraced a long stretch of years.

At first sight this fact may appear little noteworthy, and its bearing on our Athena head may not be perceived. It takes on a fresh aspect, however, when we realise that there is no marble to be found within hundreds of miles of Cyrene, and, in consequence, the stone must have been imported to the city. It might be suggested that not the marble but the finished carvings were imported, as we know from literary evidence was sometimes done in other parts of the Greek world. Had the English and ourselves found only one or two examples of supreme merit, this theory might be tenable. No one, however, will attempt to uphold it in the face of the numerous busts, statues, bas-reliefs, grave monuments and inscriptions, many of which are of very little importance, which were dug up by the Englishmen and ourselves. Portrait busts alone show that Cyrene had her own sculptors who, even though they lacked the advantage their *confrères* of many Greek cities had in near-by quarries, managed to overcome the difficulties Nature put in their way and struggled to a mastery of their chosen art. The bearing of this on the Athena will become manifest as we go further into the study of the subject.

If only another Pausanias, one might suggest, had gone sight-



seeing and note-taking along the surprising shores of Libya, our work of interpretation had been far simpler. But though we are not helped by such written evidence, we can still discover the essential qualities and meanings of these sculptures, and the diggers who in years to come drive our trenches deeper into the ground will find nothing more unexpected than the Athena, for she is the drifted seaweed that proves the still invisible land. In fact, I for one am glad we have no Pausanias to dull the edge of our wits with his bald and often erroneous statements. He has helped much in making it possible to draw up chronological tables and schedules of all sorts regarding the development of Greek sculpture, yet had he never written, the true understanding of the art, the comprehension of the forces that moulded it from the days of its early promising effort through its bloom of unchallenged perfection on to its phosphorescent decay, would have been not less full and possibly even more intelligent than it is to-day. Pausanias and others of his kind have handed down many names which mean, in truth, no more to us than the titles "master this" or "master that" of the mediæval German school of painting. Such facts and data are of infinitely little importance. Even without them the razor-sharp critical powers of a Heinrich Brunn or an Adolf Furtwaengler (before he gave up his energy to acrimonious and petty dispute) were not to be denied and without any fictitious aid of names would have interpreted Greek art to us.<sup>1</sup> That there are always blind souls who, when they see the Hermes of Praxiteles, think it Roman, and consider the Maiden of Anzio a work of the time of the Antonines, and who find other blind souls to follow them, does not delay the Brunns and

Furtwaenglers when they make their rare appearance in the world of scholarship.

Thus with no help or suggestion derived from information given us by ancient travellers we start on our study of the Athena with the knowledge that the technique of the art of sculpture was so well understood, and the practice of it so common, at Cyrene, that we need not, unless forced by internal evidence, look elsewhere for the nameless sculptor who carved this masterpiece. The result will show that all the internal evidence is in favour of its Cyrenean origin.

Since, then, sculpture was at Cyrene, as everywhere else in the Greek world, one of the common modes of expression, it remains for us to study the influences to which it was subjected. We meet here the strange phenomenon that the millennial-old civilisation of Egypt exerted apparently no influence whatever on the young Greek town to the west. That towards the end of the latter's career, when she had fallen under Ptolemaic control, she should be unaffected by Egyptian thought is not surprising, for Egypt herself had at that time submitted to the spell of Greece, and the true Egyptian art must have seemed to the fellahin who then cultivated the Nile valley almost as strange as it does to us. If, however, the often-expressed theory, supposed to be borne out by certain statues found on the Acropolis of Athens and elsewhere, that the archaic sculptors of the Greek mainland were more or less governed by Egyptian ideals, be true, then it is odd that even the most archaic art of Cyrene, represented by statuettes of the sixth century B.C., does not exhibit a similar tendency. But this belief in the Egyptian influence on the artists of Greece is based, it seems to me, on unsound evidence.

There are obviously two, and only two, chief points to consider, if one would fully understand a work of art. One is its outer form, the other what it is trying to express; for even the childish and misdirected efforts of the "Futurists" are an endeavour to express something—how futile these efforts are is shown by the fact that were it not for the titles given the works by the Futurists themselves no one, no matter how capable an artist or how mystical a dreamer, could possibly guess what they were intended to represent. The works show an even greater confusion of mind than that of Father Castel who in the early part of the eighteenth century attempted to make instruments which he called *clavecin des couleurs* and *clavecin des odeurs*, instruments intended to produce by means of changing colours and perfumes the same effects as music.

Now one thing in very truth Greek art never was, either in poetry, sculpture, painting, or in any other form: it was never confused, but had always perfect lucidity. In sculpture, for instance, the composition of the groups and figures, though often displaying an intricacy almost as great as that of a knot by Leonardo, is never anything but clear to the trained eye. To understand the value of this quality one need only look at the work of Rodin, which, no matter what elements of greatness it may be thought to have, certainly has not one slightest atom of Greek quality. Besides the evil of confusion another failure sculpture may show is the stagnation of formalism. This is one of the most noticeable features of Egyptian art. Notwithstanding the wonderful technical dexterity of the workers in that land, hieratic influences were too strong for them and their natural impulses

were shackled by the bonds of dogma. This blight, too, the Greeks avoided. What then is the ground for maintaining that their early art was influenced by Egypt? That the early sculptors may have learnt many technical processes from Egyptians I would neither deny nor affirm. They may even have had Egyptian teachers, just as later the Romans had Grecian ones, but that does not mean that Greek art was of necessity moulded in accordance with Egyptian feelings and ideals.

True it is that there are certain Greek statues which resemble in pose and stiffness certain Egyptian statues, but there is a fundamental difference between the two groups. The pose is an accident and can be duplicated in work from other parts of the world. The fundamental difference is that the stiffness of the Greek work does not represent the formalism of Egypt, but it is due to the awkwardness of inexperience. Take, for instance, the "Aunts" found on the Athenian Acropolis. They are by an unpractised, stiff hand and in that sense they are formal; but they are far more, delightfully spontaneous. Such work would have been inconceivable to an Egyptian and would have seemed to him irreligious and indecent. It is not to be thought that Greek art even in its period of fullest bloom was not formal; it was. It was the wonderful talent of the Greek clearly to understand the laws proper to the various arts, but he was always spontaneous and original, and his work exhibits formality but not formalism.

These qualities are seen in the earliest work found at Cyrene, the terra-cottas already mentioned. That they should be so manifested is but another proof of the amazing force and individuality of the Greek mind. Any other race would almost surely have felt the influence of Egypt. Her territory joined



that of Cyrene on the eastern border and the land between the city and the Nile offered no barriers of mountains or desert to hinder easy and comparatively rapid communication, yet the outer form and inner content of these early Cyrenean figures is completely and unmistakably Greek. That traders passed back and forth from one region to the other cannot be doubted. Caravans plodded their slow way from the sacred fountain to the mysterious river, coastwise boats skirted the inhospitable shore even as they do to-day. The Greek, then as now the costermonger of the Mediterranean, made his money, but he kept his individuality. Throughout the centuries, until at last spiritual aloofness was trampled down by a ruder and more powerful race, at Cyrene as completely as at Athens, the Greek maintained his own standards and beliefs. As the clumsy terra-cottas, wrought not very long after the first settlers were guided to the spring which made a great city possible, show this, so also does the Athena. Individual she is, and unique, but she is pure Greek. The reasons for some part of her individuality will become clear as we study her still further.

We see, then, that the Athena is a work expressing with unveiled distinctness the Greek spirit, and also that there is no reason to suppose that the sculptor was other than Cyrenean; it remains to find out at what date the figure was carved. Often a mere fragment like this exhibits some detail that makes it easy to fix the date of its origin with considerable accuracy. In this case the question is complicated by both technical points and general considerations. Had this head been found in Greece itself or in any part of the Greek portion of Asia Minor, the history of which is well known and the



art of which has been laid bare by the archæologist, we should have various well-established criteria by which to test and estimate the head. But the definite historical records of Cyrene are very scanty, and though what is probably in general a fairly accurate idea of the development of the city can be built up from the verses of poets, the accounts of historians and other sources of various kinds, still there is little to help us date a single work of art. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the deeper currents which gave the course to the life of Cyrene were very different from those which guided the life of other colonies. Pindar's odes alone would serve to show that the African city was in pretty constant relation with the mother country. Hence it is safe to assume that the arts developed in Cyrene very much as they did elsewhere in the Greek world.

At the present time surely enough is known of the various parts of that world to make us realise that all advance did not spring from Greece herself. Though the Greek spirit was bound to express itself in similar forms wherever Greeks settled, still sometimes one region, sometimes another, was in the lead. Hence any chronological scale as applied to art must be elastic, and one must not give way to the temptation to judge every new find by the standards set by the artists of Greece herself. Provincialism and archaism often take similar external forms. So, too, it is a general law that colonies develop more rapidly than the country from which they spring. A rapid development may be brought about also by geographical and climatic conditions in places which, at first sight, do not appear to be conducive to the advancement of art.

In years to come it will be proved beyond a doubt, I believe, that Cyrene was such a place. Her distance from the regions in which we are accustomed to think of the Greeks as working out their destiny saved her from the wastage of those wars which it is hard to regret because they have given us immortal pictures of Greek courage and devotion. What her relations with the native powers were we do not yet know, but had they led to any such struggles as made the pride of Athens and the other cities of the mother country, surely some echo would have reached our ears. So we may think of Cyrene as waxing fat from the moment when the first settlers, after their long wanderings to find a habitable spot, climbed the rocky hillsides and quenched their thirst at the spring which with its bright arms still holds a small settlement. It is for these general considerations of easy colonial growth, and freedom from external distractions, that I think the Athena can be safely dated rather earlier than we should be tempted to date her had she been found, let us say, in Athens or Sparta.

The technical point which I mentioned as making it difficult to date the head, is the helmet. It is of the Corinthian type, but there is nothing in its general shape or details of form by which a date can be fixed. Furthermore, it covers the head so completely that only a few waving locks of hair over each ear and the heavy braid resting on the nape of the neck are visible. This concealment of the hair takes away in large measure one of the most helpful methods of dating statuary.

In the case of female figures, nevertheless, the treatment of the hair is less helpful, perhaps, than in statues of the rougher sex because in the former the more severe and orderly dressing

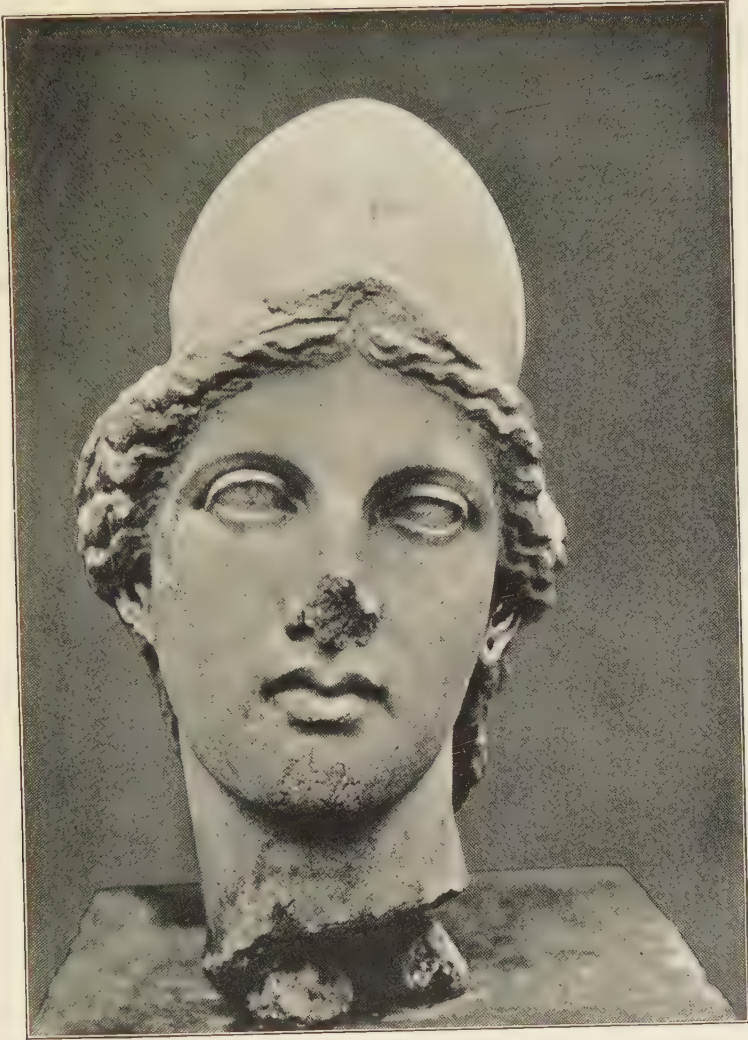


PLATE LXI.



of the bound locks gave less chance for individuality of treatment than did the crisp and wind-tossed curls of youths and men; still, even in the women's figures the hair very often betrays the date of the sculptor. Few though the tresses are which escape the stern covering of Athena's helmet, they are sufficient to help us in our elusive pursuit. The general method in which the hair is arranged, parted over the brow and drawn closely back above the ears to a knot or short doubled up braid at the back, is one that suffered but little change during several centuries. In the archaic time the locks fell more loosely behind, while in the fourth century they were more knotted, but these slight variations occur now and again throughout the whole period of great Greek art and were due more to individual fancy of artist or model than to the stifling rules of fashion.

But though we must finally conclude that the mode of wearing the hair does not assist us, as the cut of the dress most certainly would have done had we been fortunate enough to find the body of the statue, still the tresses between the temple and the ear have a quality of their own which points to a definite time. They suggest the loose waving form of life with noteworthy success. The sculptor belonged to a period when the special nature of marble was thoroughly understood. The period had passed when bronze and marble were treated in almost identical fashion, and the time had come when sculptors could manage various materials with complete understanding and were enabled to reproduce surfaces or substances in the way best suited to malleable metal or to friable stone.

The most perfect example of this understanding of sub-



stance which we possess, and one that has never been surpassed, is the head of Hermes by Praxiteles made in the first half of the fourth century before Christ. The hair of the Athena is handled in much the same way. The locks and strands are not sharply outlined and separated one from another but flow from brow to neck in subtly broken masses among which the light plays in and out as softly as in nature. This naturalistic treatment became common after it had once been arrived at, but the tendency after the end of the fourth century was to try for purer realism. This could not be attained by greater skill in modelling and carving but only by polishing or engraving the surface. The Athena exhibits neither of these signs of decadence but the surface still shows that lovely dusty softness which is characteristic of the best work of the late fifth and early fourth centuries, a softness which would not have been imperceptible and lacking in effect even when the figure was tinted with colour, as, probably, all Greek sculpture was.

It is not only the hair which suggests the date of the early fourth century as the time when the Athena was made. The broad chin, projecting well away from the neck, a chin that would be heavy, were it not for the exquisiteness of its outline, which seems to have the living force of a coiled steel spring, is such as was common in the fifth and early fourth centuries. So, too, are the broad set, wide opened eyes overhung by the long low curve of the brow. Not a sign in these of the sentimentally dreaming eyes with their melting lower lids which we associate with the work of the imitators and followers of Praxiteles; not a trace of the furrowed brow and the eye gleaming, like a live coal, from the deep shadowed

socket such as we see in the work of Scopas and the superb masters of Pergamon.

In discussing such a fragment as this Athena it cannot be too clearly remembered that the sculptor, like the poet, does but express his own day, and if Praxiteles was delicate and sentimental or Scopas forceful and passionate, it was because these were characteristic qualities of their periods. These are, furthermore, exactly the qualities one would expect at a time when old standards were beginning to be doubted and the future offered nothing so substantial to take their place.

The same phenomenon is seen in the seventeenth century of our era. In both periods thoughtful people either clung to a sentimental repetition of old ideas which no longer had life-giving and creative force, but were loved and dwelt on for the sake of old association, or else they were driven to a passionate striving after new and dimly seen hopes and ideals. Sentimental dreaming took the place of good hope and assurance while mystical passion took that of intelligent piety. In the face of the Athena there is seen no sign of a troubled spirit, she is calm and steadfast with the strength of perfect self-poise, which could hardly be, were she sprung from a later time than the early fourth century.

It has been insisted that there is in this head no trace of sentimentality, and it may be thought that I have failed to notice, or to give due weight to, the curious pose, drooping over slightly to one side. This is one of the most noticeable points about the head, but, to my mind, it expresses a feeling common in the fifth and early fourth centuries and is not motivated in the slightest degree by the later sentimentality. In the old man seated on the ground in the Olympia pedi-

ment, in the Mourning Athena at Athens, in most of the grave steles of the late fifth and early fourth centuries, in the portrait bust of Pericles, is to be seen, in the pose and expression of the figures, the expression of a deep sentiment of combined gravity and tenderness. Again and again this sentiment is expressed by the great dramatists in words that ring down the centuries like distant bells. It is the recognition of suffering and sorrow but also of the self-control that meets them undismayed. When the Greeks lost their faith, at the same time they lost this control. In the Demeter of Cnidos and the portrait of Mausolus there are unmistakable signs of lack of control, — in the former the startled pose, and in the latter the look of distress plainly visible in the fine and vigorous face. The Athena resembles the Pericles and the grave steles in this respect. The head leans over as though bent by the wind (a position which emphasises the exquisite shape of the neck), but in the steady, quiet eyes and in the sensitive closed lips one sees plainly that simple directness that distinguished the Greeks of the period to which I attribute this head, from all the other peoples who have inhabited this earth.

I have just mentioned the mouth of the figure, and this is the feature to which I referred before as showing, possibly, the effect of local circumstance on the sculptor. It is a very noticeable mouth; large with unusually full and richly modelled lips — lips that could send the battle cry echoing across the scarred and rock-strewn hills or could whisper like the brook beneath the rosy-plumed oleanders. In shape it is by no means a typical Greek mouth, but has a trace of the fuller form common to the Libyans with whom the Cyreneans

were in constant and close intercourse. While it is true that history fails to note a single case of an individual of pure black blood accomplishing anything of note except in a military way, such do often possess great beauty of form and feature, and this fact has been seized upon by the sculptor of the Athena. With great skill he has softened the somewhat savage shape and given it the lines that are consequent upon a higher civilization.

We have come now to the end of our study of this bit of sculpture. It could be compared indefinitely with other heads, and the similarities or differences could be pointed out. Little would result, however, from such comparisons. What is needed is more sculpture from the same region with which to study the Athena. But till this is forthcoming, we are left to the general conclusions derived from this single example. These conclusions are that the Athena was carved by some as yet unknown artist at Cyrene in the first half of the fourth century B.C. and that the work differs from the Greek work we are accustomed to in showing local characteristics both in special features and in method. This may seem to be of small importance and the head to be unworthy so elaborate a discussion; such would be the case were we to think of it merely as an archæological remnant of a forgotten city and time. But this head is more than a mere bit of flotsam. It is not a dead and meaningless fragment, but has still the suggestive and creative power of any true work of art. This vitality and artistic veracity are shown by the extreme clearness with which it illustrates two of the fundamental characteristics of the Greek genius — humanism and directness.

The simplicity and directness of the Greek showed itself



in all he did or made. He never attributed human emotions to nature and never bound himself with dogmatic conventions. For these reasons he was never sentimental and never dry or false. He saw ugliness, moral as well as material, in the world around him, but recognising that it in no way added to happiness, he did not wallow in it and proclaim himself a "realist." When he came to consider religion he was straightforward in his treatment of the Gods as he was with himself. They were but a superior race born from the same great mother Earth (Pindar, *Nem.* VI. 1). Athena, the Goddess, is but a woman and nothing more. He saw beautiful women in the cities where he dwelt and in form of their physical perfection he represented the bright-eyed Goddess. He sought no imaginary qualities, he attempted to express no hazy, mystical dreams but finding beauty in mankind, he was satisfied to reproduce it so well as might be.

Ordinary everyday life was the chief interest of the thoughtful Greek. He had the same circumstances of existence around him as we have to-day, and knew just as much of the origin or the end of it all. Life, death and the passing show of time were his schoolmasters as they are ours, and from them he learnt humanism. He thought of the world not as a blind accident nor as a mystical promise but merely as the setting for man and hence the conduct of life became his chief interest.

The Greek sought for all means whereby he might avoid the pitfalls of youth, secure the comforts of well-rounded growth and minimise the weaknesses and griefs of old age. To attain this ideal certain things were seen to be necessary, and from Solon, who considered that the man was happy who had health, good fortune, good looks and children, to



Aristotle, who (Rhet. 1360 b, 14) gave the same definition in a more amplified form, the ideal did not alter. Even to-day there is but one part of this that seems strange to us. That is the stress laid on personal beauty. Good fortune, health, wisdom, children and particularly wealth go to form the general ideal of the modern world, but there can be only few who would admit that the desire for physical beauty was part and parcel of their ideal. The Greek on the other hand frankly desired it almost more than anything else and showed his perfectly simple and entirely pleasant belief in its value by his games and by many a story which he told as illustrative of enduring truths. One of these tales has a bearing on the Athena of Cyrene. It is that of Peisistratus, who in order to become ruler of Athens came there accompanied by a beautiful woman in regard to whom he told the credulous citizens that she was the Goddess Athena herself.

Thus we see that it is due to no mere partiality for the pleasing form on the part of the unknown sculptor that this head from Cyrene is beautiful, but because his brain and hand were guided by ideals that were second nature to him. As we grow familiar with the head, the loveliness of every feature, the sharp insistence on sweet feminine beauty make one wish destruction might fall on the vague and dreamy and contorted realisms with which many of the modern artists would attract our attention. The calm and steadfast eyes look at us across the centuries and question our mysticism. The straightforward, immediate, perfect humanity gives us pause in our mad search for novelty, and should we conclude that this is perfect art, though we may lose the sympathy of our contemporaries, we shall win the companionship of those whose laurels are immortal.



GIORGIONE

*Although in the following Study of Giorgione I express certain conclusions which seem to me certain, it is nevertheless probable that there will never be absolute agreement about his works. The indubitable facts concerning him are so very few that no two critics can be expected to see the matter eye to eye. I disagree in many points with the pathbreakers Morelli and Berenson, but it should not be forgotten that the knowledge of such men gives an added keenness to the innate powers of perception of those who come after them. Their torch lights ours, and so the path is pursued.*

*The publication of Justi's valuable work on Giorgione (Berlin, 1908), in which all the pictures still in existence that have bearing on Giorgione are reproduced, makes full illustration of this Study quite unnecessary.*

## I. PAINTINGS ATTRIBUTED TO GIORGIONE

A GREAT upheaval and destruction of old traditions has taken place of late years in regard to paintings, and while much truth has been brought to light, a great deal of fancy has been given the semblance of veracity. The name of Morelli is familiar to all who take a serious interest in the paintings of the Italian schools, and though he was not the first to practise what not inaptly has been dubbed the 'toe-nail' method of criticism, yet his writings are more voluminous than those of other authors, and exemplify this method of criticism more completely, so that he may be taken as the protagonist of the school. It was the development of photography, and the vast increase in the number of pictures of which photographs could be procured, which gave rise to the Morellian school. The writers of earlier days who could not have before them on their tables, or carry with them to the galleries, a large quantity of reproductions of the works of any one master, were in a large measure prevented from studying the comparative likenesses or dissimilarities of such pictures.

But, as was natural, with this intensive study of photographs has come about a microscopic method of looking at pictures which often disregards the larger and more unquestionable qualities, and satisfies itself with tricks of drawing and the painting of details. It is as though instead of considering



the structure and content of a book, one should measure the lines and number the punctuation points. It is within the realm of possibility that the day has passed for treatises based on such thorough study and acute perception of the qualities expressed by the Italian painters as were written by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, or such magnificently imaginative and poetic interpretations as the enduring verities first enunciated by Ruskin.

Not that these men did not make mistakes. Had they never done so we should not be able to give a true valuation to their work. Stupidity is not demonstrated by the making of blunders but by the spirit that animates the person at the moment of their commission. Ruskin, to illustrate by means of the brightest example, realised that paintings are expressions of thought just as much as are printed books, and that they are to be read and understood not by adding the vowels together in one heap and the consonants in another, but in their entirety.

Morelli and his followers, on the other hand, are obviously in large measure satisfied by an analysis of external forms and if they discover that each of two pictures presents the same number of curved and straight lines, no further proof is needed to satisfy them that the same author is responsible for both works. It is true that details of style must be studied and were often neglected by the earlier critics, but the famous proof of the identity of Moses and Melchisedek — “you take off the *-oses* and add the *-elchisedek*” — will never satisfy many people. Morelli forgot that it requires no special perception to discover that Botticelli gave his figures square nails on their toes and fingers, or that the knuckles of Rosselli's figures

are apt to be swollen. But it is exactly this kind of observation which copyists possess. By the observation of such points one is able to say only that such and such a work is externally like the works of this or that artist, but that it is by him depends on quite other proofs.

One or two examples will show the fallacy of such a method of argument. There is in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts a picture representing the Virgin and Child with St. John. The name of Botticelli is on the frame. So far as finger nails or shape of nostril or locks of hair or position of fingers go (and all these details are peculiarly treated by Botticelli), the work might be considered to be by him. It is, however, certain that Botticelli was not the painter of the panel. Among several circumstances that demonstrate this, such as the method of painting employed by the artist, there is one that has to do with the spirit of the work, and which in itself is sufficient proof: I refer to the figure of St. John. We have enough works by Botticelli, the authenticity of which is established beyond all question, to know that he could never at any period of his career have represented this character with a simper that reminds one of Francia's sentimental figures.

The picture is by a feeble imitator of the master. The works of Botticelli and his imitators offer, because of the very marked peculiarities of the master, extremely good examples to show what mistakes arise by relying too exclusively on the Morelian method, and in both public and private collections are many pictures showing the mannerisms of the Florentine but which are certainly not by him.<sup>1</sup> Take another master,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Berenson has done much to correct the attributions in his studies on the artist he calls, since his real name is unknown, the *Amico di Sandro*. Berenson's *amico* was, I believe, several *amici*.

Leonardo. There has lately gone to America<sup>1</sup> a panel representing the head of a woman. It was left by Morelli when he died to Donna Laura Minghetti. To the followers of Morelli, the picture seemed for a long time genuine enough, but when the style of the headdress, the tone of the colour and character of the painting, and lastly the position of the head on the panel itself, had been studied, it became evident that the painting was a modern forgery, and this was further proved when an attempt was made to clean the panel.

These illustrations are sufficient to show that the final judgment of a picture should be based on more than its technical peculiarities. The observation of these is good to begin with, but it does not suffice. That even Morelli himself instinctively felt the weakness of his method is shown in a most humorous way in his description of his "discovery" of the author of a portrait of a woman in the Borghese Gallery.

He tells us how before he looked at this canvas with *kritischem Auge* he had first thought it to be by Dosso Dossi and then by Sebastiano Luciani. The rest is too naïve to translate, it must be given verbatim. "Eines Tages jedoch, als ich wieder fragend und entzückt vor dem mysteriösen Bilde stand, begegnete mein eigener Geist dem des Künstlers, welcher aus diesen weiblichen Zügen heraus sah und siehe da, in der gegenseitigen Berührung zündete es plötzlich wie ein Funken und ich rief in meiner Freude aus: Nur du, mein Freund, Giorgione kannst es sein, und das Bild antwortete: Ja, ich bin's"; and then follows analysis and dissection of the portrait.

The still small voice of his soul having interpreted the riddle

<sup>1</sup> In the gallery of Mr. Davis, in Newport, R.I.

of the picture he *then* saw that the eye, the expression, the mouth were such as only Giorgione could paint. In a critical case like this Morelli had to look first to something other than anatomical or sartorial shapes. Unfortunately, in this particular case, he has convinced but few students by this sudden and mysterious interpretation of the picture, and only his most ardent apostles see in the ill-drawn portrait anything but a feeble imitation of certain of the less subtle qualities of the great Venetian.

Morelli made, however, other discoveries in regard to Giorgione of greater import than this; but before taking them up in detail it will be worth while to fix clearly in our minds what we know about the Venetian's work from contemporary or approximately contemporary writers. Vasari and Ridolfi do not, indeed, fail to give the name of Giorgione to many a picture that had never felt the artist's brush, but they saw many a picture that has since disappeared and what they tell us is the basis of all modern criticism of this most poetic of all the Venetians. I believe it can be shown that much which the earlier writers said of him, and which has since been forgotten or unwisely disregarded, is true.

I will say nothing of the life that Giorgio Barbarelli Giorgione, Zorzone as his comrade Venetians called him, led. That has little to do with us. I wish merely to show which pictures now labelled with his name may in my opinion be confidently accepted as his, and which ones we are justified in taking from him. In his early days he painted, says Vasari, in the second edition of the "Lives":

1. Many pictures of the Virgin.
2. David, armed and with long hair, holding the head of Goliath.
3. Warrior with a red cap, a fur cloak and a silk jacket.



4. Child.  
(2, 3, and 4 were owned by the Patriarch of Aquileia.)
5. Portrait of Giovanni Borgherini and his master.
6. Head of a warrior, owned by Anton de' Nobili in Florence.
7. Portrait of Consalvo Ferrante.
8. Portrait of the Doge Leonardo Loredano.
9. Many other portraits.
10. Frescoes on the Ca Soranzo in Venice — one representing a figure of Spring.
11. Frescoes on the front of the Fondaco de' Tedeschi — the scenes were apparently fantastical or allegorical.
12. Christ carrying the cross, in the church of San Rocco.
13. A nude figure to show that by means of reflections painting is able to show all parts of a thing at once.
14. Portrait of Catharine, Queen of Cyprus.
15. Portrait of one of the Fugger family.

This list suffices to show that Vasari's knowledge of Giorgione's work was slight — and we can prove furthermore it was also imperfect. This is disheartening enough, but a still greater disappointment comes from the fact that of this list of fifteen numbers (including of course many more than fifteen pictures) there are but five of which either the originals or copies are preserved to-day. These five are Nos. 2, 5 (?), 11, 12, and 15. Numbers 5 and 15 are certainly not by Giorgione. The former is not improbably the picture in Berlin (No. 152) of which a replica is in the Louvre (No. 1156), both pictures attributed merely to the Venetian school, and the latter hangs in the Munich Gallery (No. 1107) under the name of Cariani.<sup>1</sup> No. 2 is usually thought to be the picture in Vienna, but Justi (Giorgione, p. 182) shows that it may be a picture in Brunswick.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An inscription of the seventeenth century on the back of this picture reads: *Giorgon De Castel Franco, F. Maestro De Titiano*. The picture was engraved by Wenzel Hollar in 1650, as the portrait of Buffalmacco by Giorgione.

<sup>2</sup> The picture in Brunswick, a poor replica of which is in Buda-Pesth, is, or is derived from, a picture engraved by Hollar in 1650 and called by him a "portrait of Giorgione by himself." This is possible, but the picture is a mere wreck. See Justi, *loc. cit.*



Ridolfi gives a much longer list of Giorgione's works:

16. Madonna enthroned, in the church of San Liberale in Castelfranco. Portraits.
17. The dead Christ held by angels, at Treviso.
18. Frescoes on Giorgione's own house in Venice. Figures and fantasies. Frescoes on the Ca Soranzo (same as No. 10). Destroyed all but a woman with flowers in her hand and Vulcan who whips Cupid.
19. Fables from Ovid; among them Apollo and Daphne, and Zeus as a bull with Europa on his back. These showed strong landscape feeling. Gigantomachia. Deucalion and Pyrrha. Apollo and the Python. Apollo and Daphne. Io. Phaethon. Pyrrhus and Phlegon. Eos. Diana and Callisto. Mercury stealing Apollo's herds. Jove and Europa. Cadmus and serpents' teeth. Actæon. Venus and Mars caught by Vulcan. Niobe. Jove and Mercury at the house of Baucis. Ariadne. Alcides. Achelous. Deianaira. Loves of Apollo and Hyacinth. Venus and Adonis. Those owned by Sig. Vidman were: birth of Adonis, Adonis and Venus, Adonis's death.  
Portraits (cf. No. 9): Agostino Barbarigo, Catharine Cornaro (perhaps the same as No. 14), Consalvo Ferrante.
20. Frescoes on the Ca Grimani alla Servisa (Nude woman of beautiful form); on a house on the Campo di Santo Stefano, near S. M. Giubenico (Bacchus, Venus and Mars, half figures, grotesques and *putti*); and on the Fondaco de' Tedeschi (same as No. 11), *trofei*, nudes, heads, allegorical figures measuring the world. Man on horseback.
21. A concert (now in the Pitti).
22. Allegory of human life in Casa Cassinelli, Genoa (Nurse holding crying child, and a knight; Youth disputing with Philosophers, and an old man).
23. Celius Plotius attacked by Claudius.
24. Family group — un vecchio in atto di castrare un gatto.
25. Naked woman and shepherd. She smiles at him as he plays his pipe.
26. David, a knight and a soldier, owned by And. Vendramin.
27. Naked Venus "ignuda dormiente, — è in Casa Marcella è a piedi è Cupido con augellino in mano."
28. Woman dressed as a gipsy, in house of Gio. Batt. Sanuto.
29. Saul holding by the hair the head of Goliath brought to him by David. Owned by the Signori Leoni di San Lorenzo.
30. Judgment of Paris, owned by the Signori Leoni di San Lorenzo.
31. Judgment of Solomon, in Casa Grimana di Santo Ermacora; the figure of the executioner unfinished. (Now at Kingston Lacy, England.)
32. Virgin, St. Jerome and other figures, owned by Signor Gussoni.

33. Warrior, owned by Signor Ruzzini.
34. Knight with black armour, owned by Signori Contarini da S. Samuele.
35. Half figure of St. Jerome reading, owned by Signori Malipieri.
36. Portraits of Luigi Crasso, seated, with spectacles in his hand. Owned by Nicolo Crasso.
37. Story of Psyche. Twelve pictures.
38. St. Sebastian, in the Chiesa della Annunciata, Cremona.
39. St. Sebastian, — three-quarter length, owned by Prince Aldobrandini.
40. David, owned by Prince Borghese.
41. A youth with a curious fur cloak, owned by Signori Muselli in Verona.
42. Christ led to Calvary, with Mary and the virgin Veronica, figures half life size.
43. Head of Polyphemus.
44. Portraits of women with strange ornaments and feathers in their hair.  
David with long hair, dressed in a corselet and with the left hand in the hair of the head of Goliath (same as No. 2). This was a portrait of himself.
45. A general.
46. Youth with soft hair and armed.  
Portrait of one of the Fuggers (same as No. 15).
47. A nude figure with a green cloth over his knees and armour beside him, owned by Van Veert in Antwerp.
48. 'Some say that he began' the picture of Pope Alexander III and Frederick I in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in Venice.

This list is disappointing in the same way as the previous one, but, nevertheless, several of the numbers may be added to the list of pictures which are preserved. Besides those already noted in Vasari's list Nos. 16, 17, 19 (?), 21, 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 38, 40, exist in one form or another, but Nos. 17, 21, 23, 38 and 40, though still preserved, are not by Giorgione. No. 17 has nothing whatever to do with Giorgione, and is attributed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle to Pordenone. Whether this is by him is more than doubtful; I will speak of it in detail and also of 21 later. No. 23, called *The Bravo*, is in Vienna and is perhaps by Cariani; 30 is



PLATE LXII.



probably by Campagnola and is known by copies.<sup>1</sup> No. 38 is in the Brera and is by Dosso Dossi, who was also the painter of 40, which is still in the Borghese Gallery. No. 48 was probably the same picture as that mentioned in the Venetian archives under date of August 14, 1507, and was probably destroyed in the fire of 1575.<sup>2</sup>

Another author from whom we are able to gather more and important information, is Marc Antonio Michiel, more commonly known as the Anonimo Morelli. Among the pictures which he saw in Venice and neighbouring towns were several attributed to Giorgione:

49. Head of a boy holding an arrow. Owned by Ant. Pasqualino, who obtained it from Zuanne Ram.

50. Head of San Giacomo holding a pilgrim's staff. Owned by Ant. Pasqualino.

The Anonimo states that this was either by Giorgione or by one of his pupils and that it was copied from the Christ in the Church of San Rocco.

51. St. Jerome, nude, seated in a desert place in the moonlight; "copied from a work by Giorgione." Owned by And. Odoni.

52. Three Philosophers. Owned by Taddeo Contarino.

53. Hell, with Æneas and Anchises. Owned by Taddeo Contarino.

54. Landscape with the birth of Paris. "One of his early works."

55. Portrait of Geronimo Marcello, armed, — the body turned away from, and the head towards, the spectator. Owned by Geronimo Marcello.

Nude Venus, sleeping in the open air. "The landscape and the Cupid were finished by Titian." Owned by Geronimo Marcello (same as No. 27).

58. St. Jerome reading. Half figure (same as No. 35?). Owned by Geronimo Marcello.

59. Soldier armed, but without a helmet. Half figure. Owned by Zuanantonio Venier.

60. Head of a shepherd. In his hand a fruit. Owned by Zuanne Ram.  
Head of boy. In his hand an arrow. Owned by Zuanne Ram (same as No. 49).

<sup>1</sup> Larpent, "Le jugement de Paris attribué au Giorgione," Christiania, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> See Gronau, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, 1908, p. 405. His comment on p. 407 seems to me an error.



61. Stormy landscape with a gipsy and a soldier. Owned by Gabriel Vendramin.
62. Dead Christ and an angel holding him above the tomb. Finished by Titian. Owned by Gabriel Vendramin.
63. Nude figure in a landscape. Pen drawing. Owned by Michiel Contarini.
64. Finished picture of No. 63. Owned by Michiel himself.
65. Portrait of Giorgione's father. Owned by Piero Servio.

Of this list, the particular value of which lies in the fact that it was made by one whose early years were probably contemporary with the close of Giorgione's life, Nos. 52, 54, 61 and perhaps 62<sup>1</sup> are still (either the originals or copies) in existence. No. 59 suggests a picture in the Colonna Gallery in Rome which has much Giorgionesque feeling, but is in a ruined condition.

Still another writer who mentions several pictures by the master is Giacomo Barri. I quote the passages from the English translation of his book:<sup>2</sup>

Page 106. Castelfranco. "Here is an admirable Picture of the *Blessed Virgin with her Son*, the work of *Giorgione*. There are likewise divers Palaces near adjacent where you will find works of the same *Giorgione* as also of Paulo Veronese." (Same as No. 16.)

Venice, page 52. "And upon a front of a House near the house of the *Pisani*, and the Palace of the *Flangini*, in *S. Maria Gibenigo*, there are painted by the hand of *Giorgione*, many *Freezes* in *Chiaro Scuro*, in Yellow, Red, and Green, with rare fancies of *Boys*, in the middle of which are four Half-figures, viz., A *Bacchus*, a *Venus*, a *Mars*, and a *Mercury*, coloured after the usual manner of the Author." (There is a note added to the words "the usual manner" which reads: "Which was not to paint in above two or three colours.") (Cf. No. 20.)

Page 56. The 'Fontico de Todeseti' is mentioned. (Same as No. 11.)

Page 56. "In the field or place before S. Pauls you plainly see upon the Front of the House of *Soranzo* several Figures of *Giorgione*, most beautiful things." (Same as No. 10.)

Page 67. "The *albergo* of the said school [School of St. Marks]. As you enter, the first square on your left hand is by *Giorgione*."

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 52 f.

<sup>2</sup> *The Painter's Voyage of Italy*. Englished by W. Lodge. Written originally in Italian by Giacomo Barri, 1679.

Page 84. "*The Church of the Hospital of the Incurabili.*" "And over a side Door of the Church you may observe a little Square of our *Saviour carrying the Cross* and an Executioner drawing him along, by the hand of *Giorgone.*" (Same as No. 12.)

Treviso, page 97. "*The Mountain of Piety in the aforesaid City.*" "Here they preserve a *Christ* with a little *Angel*, a most singular work, by the hand of *Giorgone.*" (Same as No. 17.)

Cremona, page 114. "Here is a picture of *S. Sebastian* and two *Angels* by the hand of *Giorgone.*" (Same as No. 38.)

67. Parma, page 126. In the Palace of the *Fontana.* "There is also the picture of *Fra Sebastiano del Piombo*, a Painter, the work of *Giorgone.*"

Only two pictures (66, 67) not mentioned by the other authors are given in this list, and one of these, the portrait of Sebastiano del Piombo, has, I believe, been lost sight of. The picture that was in the School of St. Marks now hangs in the Academia in Venice. It represents the story of the calming of a storm by the saints Nicholas, George and Mark. Some students consider this picture to be a work by Giorgione much repainted by Palma or Paris Bordone. Others, with whom I agree, fail to see in this ugly work the slightest suggestion of Giorgione.

These then are the chief early sources for our knowledge of the subjects painted by Giorgione. If the list of his works seems small, it must be remembered that the painter was only some thirty-three years old when he died. The inaccuracy of the attributions made by these writers shows how careful one must be in dealing with the information they give us, and suggests the reflection that probably they were as careless in failing to speak of works that were certainly by the master as they were in mentioning others which unquestionably were not by him. All new attributions must, however, be based on a comparison with the few works which unbroken tradition and common consent give to Giorgione, and not with those

about which trained opinion differs. Individual judgment as to the likeness one picture bears to another is very different from convincing proof. Before criticising individual works we must consider the basis for discussion that the lists present.

Of the sixty-seven different items mentioned, the following are known to us.<sup>1</sup> 1 (?), 2, 5 (?), 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19 (?), 21 (?), 23, 26 (?), 27, 29 (?), 30, 31, 38, 40 (?), 42 (?), 52, 54, 61, 62 (?), 66. Of these only 2, 5 (?), 11, 12, 16, 21 (?), 22 (?), 26 (?), 27, 31, 52, 54, 61, 62 (?) need be considered as being related in any close way to Giorgione. The claims of Cariani, Licinio, Della Vecchia, and the host of other, generally feeble, imitators of Giorgione to the other pictures may be studied in Crowe and Cavalcaselle, or later works. Even some of the works included in the small list just given are not accepted as genuine by all the critics, but a few there are the authenticity of which could only be questioned by bringing much more serious evidence against them than I have ever seen adduced. These rare, choice works are :

2. David, armed, holding the head of Goliath. Now in Vienna. This is not the original, but, as noted by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, a late copy. I own another copy, on panel, which shows the lower part of the picture better than the Vienna copy.
11. Frescoes on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. Preserved, except a fragment only, in Zanetti's engravings.
12. Christ carrying the Cross, in the Church of San Rocco, Venice.
16. Madonna enthroned, in the Church of San Liberale in Castelfranco.
27. Naked Venus, asleep, in Dresden. Some critics still hesitate to accept Morelli's attribution of this canvas to Giorgione, but the greater number have, I believe, given a ready assent.
31. The Judgment of Solomon. Now at Kingston Lacy (Plate LXII). This, the Castelfranco Madonna, and the Three Philosophers, are in certain ways the most important works of the painter now existing.

<sup>1</sup> I put a question mark after those which by general consent are no longer attributed to Giorgione, and those which I doubt and shall discuss in the following pages.

52. Three Philosophers. In Vienna (Plate LXVI).  
 54. Landscape with the Birth of Paris. A fragment of a poor copy of this is preserved in Buda-Pesth. An engraving by T. van Kessel from a copy of the picture by Teniers shows what the whole composition was.  
 61. Stormy landscape, with a gypsy and a soldier. In the Palazzo Giovanelli, Venice (Plate LXV).

To these nine unquestioned works by Giorgione are to be added others that have no early literary evidence to bear out their claims to a Giorgionesque origin, but which unbroken tradition resisting even the assaults of modern criticism has assigned to this category. Such are :

The Judgment of Solomon, in the Uffizi.

The Fire-test of Moses, in the Uffizi.

Knight of Malta, in the Uffizi.

Head of Christ carrying the Cross, formerly in the Palazzo Loschi Vicenza, and now in Mrs. Gardner's Collection in Boston (Plate LXVII).

Study for the figure of San Liberale, in the Castelfranco picture, in the National Gallery, London.

So far as the giving of any certain knowledge of Giorgione's technique is concerned, the first three of these pictures are very disappointing, for all of them have been so thoroughly repainted that the original work is much injured. While most critics follow the tradition and believe Giorgione to have been the painter of these pictures, there are those who do not hold this opinion. For instance, Dr. Bode, one of the keenest judges of pictures, does not think the Judgment of Solomon, and the Trial of Moses, to be by him.<sup>1</sup> Others there are who think that the judgment passed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle on the Knight of Malta is very sound and satisfactory. They

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that the backs of these two panels have patterns painted on them showing that the pictures once formed part of some piece of furniture, and it was in decorating such objects that much of Giorgione's time, according to Ridolfi, was employed. For Bode's remarks cf. Burchardt's *Cicerone*, Vol. II, 913.



say: "Giorgione's work was altered by later retouching, or the painter is a skilful imitator of Giorgione's manner." Personally, I believe all these to be by him.

Taking now these fragments of written evidence and of tradition, let us see what the modern writers of most repute have considered to be examples of Giorgione's work. To begin with Crowe and Cavalcaselle, they give as true Giorgiones the following:

- The Fondaco de' Tedeschi.
- The Christ in San Rocco.
- The Judgment of Solomon at Kingston Lacy.
- The Chaldean Sages (the Three Philosophers).
- The Family of Giorgione (the picture in the Giovanelli Palace).
- The Castelfranco Madonna.
- The David in Vienna, of which they say "this is a late copy, perhaps after the original noted by Vasari."

Of the traditional pictures they consider as the master's work:

- The Judgment of Solomon, in the Uffizi.
- The Trial of Moses, in the Uffizi.
- The Knight of Malta (?), in the Uffizi.

They add:

- The Shepherd's Offering in the Beaumont (now Lord Allandale's) Collection, London.
- The Adoration of the Magi, in the National Gallery, London; formerly owned by Sir William Miles, of Leigh Court.

These last two pictures are much less well known than the others. I shall endeavour to show that the later attributions of them to Catena or others are based on a mistaken idea of Giorgione's style (not to mention Catena's), and that Crowe and Cavalcaselle were perfectly right in their estimate of them. Other pictures which are often thought of in connection with Giorgione and which they, quite rightly I believe, refused to acknowledge, are:





PLATE LXIII.



The Concert, in the Pitti.  
 The Fête Champêtre, in the Louvre.  
 Madonna and Saints, in the Louvre.  
 Nymph and Satyr, in the Pitti.  
 The Head of a Boy, at Hampton Court.  
 The Madonna and Child with St. Brigida, in Madrid.

To take more modern writers, we find a very different list of works attributed to Giorgione by Morelli.<sup>1</sup> It consists of the following :

The Trial of Moses.  
 The Judgment of Solomon.<sup>2</sup>  
 The Christ bearing the Cross.  
 The Madonna of Castelfranco.  
 The Gypsy and the Soldier (Giovanelli Palace).  
 \* The Madonna and Child with Sts. Antony and Roch. (Madrid.)  
 The Knight of Malta.  
 † \* Daphne and Apollo. This is in the Seminario of St<sup>a</sup> Maria della Salute in Venice. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (II. 165) attribute it to Andrea Schiavone, and with their opinion I agree.  
 \* The Three Ages of Man, in the Uffizi, ascribed usually to Lotto.  
 The Concert, in the Louvre. (Same as Crowe and Cavalcaselle's Fête Champêtre.)  
 The Fragment of the Birth of Paris, in the Esterhazy Gallery, Buda-Pesth.  
 \* Portrait of a Man, in the Esterhazy Gallery.  
 \* Portrait of a Woman, in the Borghese Gallery, Rome.  
 † Nymph and Satyr, in the Pitti.  
 † Portrait of a Youth, in Berlin.  
 † Head of a Boy, in Hampton Court.  
 Three Philosophers, in Vienna.  
 \* Venus in Dresden.  
 † Allegory, in Dresden. { These Morelli considers copies  
 † Judith, in St. Petersburg. { of Giorgione's work.

The pictures I have marked with an asterisk are those which Morelli was the first to claim with insistence for Giorgione,

<sup>1</sup> *Die Galerien zu München und Dresden* (Leipzig, 1891), p. 270 f.

<sup>2</sup> Morelli adds the following note: "Weder die Herren Crowe und Cavalcaselli, noch Herr Director W. Bode lassen diese zwei Bildchen als Werke des Giorgione gelten, sondern sehen dieselben als Schülerarbeiten an." So far as Crowe and Cavalcaselle are concerned, this statement is an error, as one can easily see by reading what they say on pp. 128-9 of the second volume of their *History of Painting in North Italy*.

and with the exception of the Venus not one of these attributions has been generally accepted. Those marked with a dagger are attributions of older or younger date. About all of them, certain doubts, and about most of them doubts of very serious nature, must be dispelled, before the attribution can be accepted.

The two points most noticeable in Morelli's list are the differences in the style of the pictures included and the absence of others. It would be difficult to combine works more dissimilar than the Berlin portrait of a youth and the portrait of a woman in the Borghese, and even if one grants that an artist working at the time when Giorgione flourished was subjected to influences so strong and varied that the character of his work altered from time to time, it can only be explained by a miracle that the same man painted the Castelfranco Madonna and the Daphne and Apollo. Even the last dashing works of the century-old Titian differ hardly more from his calmer earlier canvases than do these two pictures, which Morelli would have us believe were painted by a man who died at the age of thirty-two or thirty-three. This curious, one may not unfairly say erratic, combination of Morelli may perhaps be explained by supposing, as is true in other parts of his work, that he was so taken up with the similarity of certain details that he forgot to study the larger and more telling characteristics of the pictures. But what explanation is there of his strange silence regarding the Benson<sup>1</sup> and Beaumont pictures, the Judgment of Solomon at Kingston Lacy, the Vienna David, and the Christ bearing the Cross in San Rocco?

<sup>1</sup> I have not yet mentioned this picture, but shall speak of it in detail later.

A later and slightly different form of the Morelli list is given by Berenson.<sup>1</sup> It is as follows :

Berlin, Portrait of a Man.  
 Buda-Pesth, Portrait of a Man.  
 Castelfranco, Duomo, Madonna with Sts. Francis and Liberale.  
 Dresden, Sleeping Venus.  
 Florence, Uffizi, Trial of Moses ; Knight of Malta ; Judgment of Solomon.  
 Hampton Court, Shepherd with Pipe.  
 Madrid, Madonna with Sts. Roch and Antony of Padua.  
 Paris, Fête Champêtre.  
 Rome, Villa Borghese, Portrait of a Lady.  
 St. Petersburg, Judith (?).  
 Venice, Academy, Storm calmed by St. Mark. Finished in small part by P. Bordone. (In the edition of 1894, Berenson attributed this to P. Bordone, saying that perhaps it was begun by Giorgione.)  
 Venice, Seminario, Apollo and Daphne ; Giovanelli, Gypsy and Soldier ; S. Rocco, Christ bearing Cross.  
 Vicenza, Casa Loschi, Christ bearing Cross. (Now in the Gardner Collection, Boston.)  
 Vienna, Evander showing Æneas the Site of Rome. (Often called the Three Philosophers.)

In an article<sup>2</sup> published since the appearance of his book, Berenson has added to the above list several pictures which he considers to be copies of Giorgiones. They are :

Bergamo, Orpheus and Eurydice. The copy made by Cariani.  
 Buda-Pesth, Two men walking. Fragment. (This is what Morelli calls the Birth of Paris.)  
 Milan, Portrait of a lady, belonging to Signor Crespi.  
 St. Petersburg, Judith.  
 London, Portrait of a man formerly belonging to Mr. Doetsch ; now owned by Colonel Kemp.

<sup>1</sup> *The Venetian Painters of the Renaissance*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, October, 1897.



## II. THE TRUE GIORGIONE

A superficial study of the lists which have been given suffices to show that the various critics have very different standards by which to judge Giorgione and his works. I much doubt whether entire order can be brought out of the chaos that now rules, but a sounder basis for future study can be derived from a combination of the best points of the work of these very differently endowed critics than any one of them by himself offers.

So far as Crowe and Cavalcaselle go, they are, I believe, entirely right. Among the twelve pictures which they unhesitatingly ascribe to Giorgione, only three have been questioned by any one. These three are, the Judgment of Solomon, at Kingston Lacy, the Epiphany, in the National Gallery, and the Beaumont Shepherd's Offering. The only possible explanation of the fact that Morelli does not mention the picture at Kingston Lacy is that he did not see it.<sup>1</sup> It is one

<sup>1</sup> Berenson in the first edition of his little book on Venetian Painting did not mention it either, but in the third edition he passes it by with these words: "The scarcely less famous picture belonging to Mr. Banks is by the hand which painted the Christ and Adulteress, of the Glasgow Corporation Gallery, and that hand is Giovanni Cariani's. To repeat, I would have preferred to publish opinions so divergent from those usually received, in a form adequate to the importance of the theme; but I console myself with the belief that the merest indication suffices the competent. As for the others — *Procul o procul este, profani.*"

Such statements can only be excused by supposing the writer to have been pressed for time. Unless they are of sufficient importance for the author to make them intelligible, they are not entitled to our consideration. No critic is justified in making an arbitrary statement which he will not take the pains to make clear.

of those works that in every touch show the author. Even if we did not have Ridolfi's evidence for the existence of such a work, it is difficult to understand how hesitation could arise in the mind of any one undisturbed by theories as to the author of the picture. The figure of the executioner is, as Ridolfi says, unfinished. So, too, is practically the whole picture (Plate LXII).

What strikes one at first sight is the similarity to Bellini's work at the same time that one realises a development of dramatic power greater than he ever attained. The fine restraint of composition is his, the serious and painstaking technique is his, but the dramatic energy displayed in the action of the several figures is a step beyond anything which Bellini ever accomplished. And the few undoubted works show that Giorgione was great enough to compose with the same grandeur, and work with a similar perfection to Bellini, and yet give more dramatic intensity to his figures. But if any one is blind to the spirit that permeates this wonderful bit of poetry, let him study the details. The head of the youth standing upright on Solomon's right hand is most closely allied to that of the seated figure in the *Three Philosophers*. The old man on the left of Solomon is in his turn very similar to the oldest of the *Three Philosophers*. Compare the hand of the second figure from the right with the left hand of the last-mentioned Philosopher: it is the same.

The tight drawn hair of the women is the same as that of the *Castelfranco Madonna* and the *Gypsy* in the *Giovanelli Palace* picture. The strong, broad, full-toed, carefully drawn feet are what we see in the *Three Philosophers*, and the *St. Francis* of the *Castelfranco* picture. The full-lipped, small,

quietly closed but expressive mouths of the figures are such as distinguish Giorgione's other unquestioned works and show a master's touch. The draperies massed in grand, simple style, broken only by folds that truly show the quality of the stuff or its arrangement — that are not merely put in out of pure fancy — are like those that characterise the Castelfranco Madonna and the Three Philosophers. There is no refuting the judgment passed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle. This is a true Giorgione and in certain ways the finest of them all.

I have refrained from comparing it with the Dresden Venus for the reason that this discovery of Morelli's has been, though I believe on insufficient grounds, disputed, and some critics question whether the Venus is not a work of Titian. The evidence with which Morelli maintained the Giorgionesque origin of the work is very convincing, but there is a quality of the work upon which he did not lay sufficient stress. I refer to the lack of sensuousness in the figure. It is the lack of this mundane quality, the abstractness of the figure, that renders it ideal, which allies this work with the finest Greek sculpture, with figures of the Periclean epoch. The nude female figure is thought of not from a sexual standpoint, but from that of pure beauty of form. To represent such feeling was unlike Titian even in the most earnestly ideal of his youthful days. His work in almost every case has a glow of passion; Giorgione's, on the contrary, suggests loveliness that deserves the deepest admiration, but does not suggest actual human life and action. The two ideals are the poles asunder. Titian's is that of the man, Giorgione's that of the woman. As Coleridge said, "Man loves the woman, but woman loves the love of the man," and when one looks at Titian's Venuses or



PLATE LXIV.





his other female figures, one is inevitably more vigorously self-conscious and one's attention is more indissolubly bound to the body than when one's eyes rest on the statuesque beauties of the Castelfranco painter's imaginings.

The method by which these effects are depicted is unmistakable and clear. In Titian's figures of nude women the glance of the eye is often distinctly and sharply focussed in the eye of the beholder, and the action of the figure is motivated by the presence of the beholder. The painted image is the corollary of the being that looks upon her. It is not so in Giorgione's work. His Venus is self-contained, self-centred and thoughtless of the outer world. The eyes (cf. the Giovanelli picture) do not strongly draw yours to themselves, and the action does not imply a realisation of the presence of any interested gazer. For exactly these reasons, plain simple reasons, but of deepest import, the Venus of Praxiteles is of inestimably greater worth than that later impersonation of female vigour and physical delight, the Venus de' Medici. And in similar manner Giorgione proves himself a man and an artist who attained to the adequate presentation of an ideal of beauty of the female figure far more elevated and uplifting than that held by his more famous contemporary Titian. The Venus may, as Morelli said, be safely considered as a true Giorgione.

The case is not so clear, though I believe it is not less unquestionable, when we consider the Epiphany<sup>1</sup> of the National Gallery (Plate LXIII). The criticism passed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle on this picture and the Shepherd's Offering in the Beaumont Collection is, so far as it goes, sound. They

<sup>1</sup> This picture was formerly called a Bellini. It comes from the collection of Sir William Miles of Leigh Court. See Redford, *Art Sales*, I, pp. 364-5.

say of these pictures "that the style coincides with that which historians attribute to Giorgione; that most of the characteristics which predominate recur in canvases registered by the oldest authorities as those of Barbarelli; and that the landscapes in every case resemble each other and recall the country of Castelfranco." There is much more proof, however, that can be adduced to show that only Giorgione could have painted these works. But first the attribution of them both to Catena<sup>1</sup> must be shown to be groundless.

A word, however, in regard to logical reasoning about pictures, the lack of which constitutes a great weakness in Morelli and some of his followers, may perhaps be deemed not inappropriate here. Circumstantial evidence is at best only partially conclusive. Morelli did some brilliant work by its means in correcting the names under which many pictures had masqueraded. Such work must, it is self-evident, be founded on the signed works of the masters or on works whose authorship is proved by literary evidence of the strongest character. But he and his followers seem to forget that others may refuse adherence to the belief in one or more of these attributions and yet not be utterly foolish. Many minds are convinced by evidence which to other equally capable and well-trained intelligences does not carry the force of conviction, or may even seem to be based on a misapprehension of fundamental facts. Grant, however, that a given attribution of an unsigned work seems reasonable, still there are in most such cases parts of it that are to a certain extent dissimilar to the certified works of the master to whom it is attributed — otherwise it would never have been falsely named.

<sup>1</sup> Berenson, *Venetian Painters of the Renaissance*.

Were this not true, how had doubt ever arisen in men's minds as to who wrote the Rhesus, or when the Apollo Belvedere was made? Suppose now that in studying a picture and attributing it to an artist one finds a second or a third or a fourth picture that seems to be by the same painter. One sees that each has certain points in common with the signed works and others common only to the unsigned work which was the first of our new attributions. To deduce from the similarity which any two of the unsigned works bear to each other in their *differences* from the signed works of the author to whom it is desired to attribute them, that they must be by this author, is an absolutely illogical and unreasonable method of argument. One can 'prove' anything in this way, which could without difficulty enable one to show that the Two Loves of the Borghese Gallery was painted by Perugino. All that is needed is a sufficiently large list of works each differing slightly from Perugino's true masterpieces. It is but another form of the old game of turning one word into another by adding and subtracting syllables. Thus one turns *drama* into *odious*: drama, melodrama, melodious, odious.

Unfortunately Morelli did not realise the weakness of this system. Had he done so, he would never have attributed to Catena the Epiphany of the National Gallery, and his followers would not consider the same artist as the painter of the Benson Holy Family and the Beaumont Shepherd's Offering.<sup>1</sup> I do not mean to imply that he would have con-

<sup>1</sup> See *Archivio Storico dell' Arte*, 1895, I, p. 77. In this passage the writer (Miss Ffoulkes) speaking of an exhibition in London mentions the Benson picture and the Epiphany. She thinks them by neither Giorgione, nor Catena, but offers no suggestion as to the painter except that there is another picture by him in the Venice Accademia attributed (wrongly) to Cordegliagli.

sidered Giorgione as their author, but it is only by strained and extravagant reasoning that they can be claimed for Catena. They bear no resemblance in either composition, colour or idea to any of the unquestioned works by this second-rate pupil of Bellini, the imitator, *par excellence*, of the work of his greater contemporaries.

So far as a careful analysis enables one to make out from the context of the whole passage in which Morelli speaks of these works,<sup>1</sup> he seems to have convinced himself that Catena was the painter of the Epiphany because of the similarities that exist between it and the Knight adoring the Infant Christ and the St. Jerome in his Study in the same Gallery. The first thing to notice is that the likeness which the Epiphany bears to the St. Jerome is almost entirely imaginary. The chief difference between the two works is that the Epiphany is not only painted in a very different manner technically, but it is much less laboured. It shows vastly greater facility of draughtsmanship; the execution is very much more easy; the colour is fuller and purer; the chiaroscuro is more varied, and, finally, it is much more imaginatively conceived. It gives one, in fact, the impression of being by a master, whereas the St. Jerome seems nothing more either in imagination or in technique than the work of a careful, serious, arid-minded student.

The St. Jerome in fact may well be by Catena, for these are the qualities with which we know he was endowed. The similarity between the Epiphany and the Knight adoring the Infant Christ is greater, but still not very great.<sup>2</sup> But here

<sup>1</sup> *Die Galerie zu Dresden*, p. 266 f.

<sup>2</sup> It is noteworthy that Morelli claimed (as is shown by the + with which the attribution is marked) to be the first to show that this picture of the Knight was by Catena. Crowe and Cavalcaselle had already written of the picture as by



too we must remember that the attribution of the Knight to Catena is based not so much even on good circumstantial evidence as on the fairly unanimous belief among those capable of judging what certain phases of Catena's changing style probably resembled. But the points wherein the Epiphany surpassed the St. Jerome are just those in which it shows greater mastery than is exhibited in the Knight. The same stiffness and awkwardness of drawing mark the Knight as by an artist of much less capacity than him of the Epiphany.

So too does the clumsy, empty composition. The small-featured faces, the lack of appearance of real substance in the bodies, the dull and uninteresting chiaroscuro, the laboured technique are characteristic of Catena, but not one of them shows in the Epiphany. Catena may well have painted the beast like a hobby horse which the Knight's page holds, but it was an abler hand than his which drew the horses from which the Magi have dismounted. The crinkly, crushed draperies in the Knight are similar to Catena's work, but there is nothing like them in the Epiphany, where the glowing coloured garments are cast in simpler and grander and at the same time more natural lines. Can any one really imagine that the same man painted the dull, hard, conven-

Catena. Considerable care must be exercised in the use of Morelli's writings to distinguish between his true discoveries (which were many) and his agreements with earlier authorities. It may be that these agreements were based on his own private study, but there is a great difference between the result of one's study leading to our giving assent to what others have perceived before us and our discovery of what had never been imagined by our predecessors. *Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerint*, but still honesty and justice are of greater value than fame. Nor does a pleasant temper show in the implied sarcasm of Morelli's words about this picture which he calls a "herrliches Werk des Catena, obwohl es im Galeriekatalog noch immerfort bloß der Schule des Giambellino zugethielt wird (+)." It is surely not so very inaccurate to describe a work by Catena as of the 'Schule des Giambellino.'



tional head of St. Joseph in the Knight and the much more thoughtful and original face of the same figure in the Epiphany? or how can any one believe that the same artist designed heads of such different shape, eyes and noses and mouths so unlike in the one and the other work; hands in the Knight so like turtles' feet, and so vigorous and human in the Epiphany? It is surely improbable, and Crowe and Cavalcaselle were right when they recognised a great difference between the two works and saw in the smaller, richer one the hand of Giorgione. The reasoner who is calm and unpolemically minded must agree with them.

The next picture for us to consider is the Beaumont Shepherd's Offering which Crowe and Cavalcaselle give to Giorgione, but which is by Berenson and others considered a Catena.<sup>1</sup> If the Epiphany were a Catena, then the Shepherd's Offering would be also, for not only the treatment and colour as a whole, but the details, more particularly the group of the Holy Family, is distinctly alike in both. The same reasons that show that it is impossible that Catena ever painted the Epiphany apply with even greater force to the Shepherd's Offering. Both pictures are utterly unlike Catena's work in all essential points, all those, that is to say, which are the expression of character. Certain Giorgionesque qualities show more strongly in the Shepherd's Offering than in the smaller work. I will not analyse the details of form, substantiality of masses and richness of colour, for every unprejudiced eye will see that they are the same in each of these

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this picture hangs in the Vienna Gallery and I was told by the Director in 1901 that he considered it the original; but this seems to me impossible, for it is much less good in every way than the Beaumont picture. A drawing of a portion of it is at Windsor.



PLATE LXV.



two works as they are in the unquestioned works by Giorgione. But there is a quality more difficult to analyse and to express in fixed terms, that stamps the Shepherd's Offering not only as a work by Giorgione, but as a very characteristic expression of his genius. I refer to the impression given by the quietness of the scene, by the slight vagueness of it all, and to the colour and chiaroscuro that remind one of an evening landscape (Plate LXIV). All these points taken together make the scene seem mysterious and dreamlike.

Now, clearly enough, this romantic quality occurs to a greater or less extent in all the unquestioned Giorgiones. It is the deep religious ardour of Bellini turned to a broader field. It is the sharp focussed passion of Titian transmuted into an abiding love for all things beautiful. In the Giovanelli Landscape (Plate LXV) you see it in the strange combination of soldier and nude woman under the lightning-riven skies and the trees heavy and white with the storm. In the Three Philosophers you see it in the contrast of the three men of different ages and the quiet forest where they sit with the city in the distance that seems to be asleep (Plate LXVI). In the Virgin of Castelfranco you see it in the throne placed in the open meadows peopled by visionlike figures, in the deeply impressive silence and contrast of the monk and warrior, and in the still blue sea lapping the templed shores beyond. You see it in the Venus,—not any one woman so much as the presentation of everlasting feminine beauty — sleeping under the open sky across which roll great summer clouds rising from the distant sea. It is present almost invariably in his work and forms the chief richness of the Beaumont picture, in which the strangely silent group under the trees, the empty shepherd's



hut beyond and the deep distance of rolling, castelled hills and meadows, golden in the light of the low sun, is like a vision that one sees in those rare moments when one's eyes pierce the husk of this world and we seem for one treasured instant to have passed the borders and be wandering in El Dorado.

In none of Catena's authentic works does he attain to such a height of imaginative presentation of daily phenomena. He could appreciate it, as is shown by his attempt in the Knight to paint in the manner of Giorgione, but that picture alone would be sufficient to show his incapacity to attain the goal at which he aimed. Nor is this feeling which we derive from Giorgione's works imaginary and based on pre-conceived ideas. It is distinctly due to certain indubitable facts. No one questions the mystery and inexpressible beauty of the light of early dawn or evening, and it is this rather than the full, hard, mid-day glare that is the light of all Giorgione's pictures. Nor is there doubt of the impressiveness of gloom, be it of forest or of storm, and such mystery as this was dear to the hill-born artist. Nor, further, can one hesitate to admit the visionary, mirage-like appearance of vigorous action that takes place in silence and of which the anatomical details are suppressed. Such is the action of Giorgione's figures. They are plainly deeply interested in the scene of which they form part, but their faces (even in the Judgment of Solomon at Kingston Lacy) show their interest rather by the eyes than by the lips. They look, but do not speak. Like Greek Gods they act, but with terrible great silence.

And so, too, though the bodies of his figures are full of life and action, yet they rarely show the tense and emphasised muscles appropriate to such action, but appear rather, having acted,



to be now at rest. A similar peculiarity is to be observed in the draperies which, just as I have tried to show in regard to the figure of the Venus, are of the same nature as the best Greek work. They are completely motivated, that is, by the bodies beneath them. They are a positive component part of the figure, not merely an accidental addition, and they rest and move with it. Thus, as the bodies seem to be resting after motion, so the draperies seem to be also. They show none of the little, trifling, momentary folds that express actual motion, but merely those larger, more essential lines and masses that are truly expressive of the vitality and movement of the figures, whose beauty they enhance, so far as such life and activity can be expressed by woven stuffs.

Let us turn now to Catena, his Sta. Caterina, or his Virgin Enthroned, in Venice, and we see draperies that are in large measure as merely studio studies of cloth as any to which Albert Dürer ever attached hands and feet and a head and called it a human being. The folds do not carry out the action of the figure, but crinkle and ripple and break in meaningless profusion from shoulder to ankle. Giorgione was a richly imaginative, deeply thoughtful genius, and such a personality as this is indelibly stamped in the Epiphany, the Shepherd's Offering, and the Benson Holy Family. Catena was a fashionable plagiarist and moderately successful imitator of the manner of his master Bellini and of his great contemporaries; such a character as his is completely foreign to the spirit of these three pictures.

The Holy Family,<sup>1</sup> one of the many treasures of Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Parts of Mr. Benson's picture have suffered from repainting. This is especially true of the landscape, which seems to have lost its original form.

Benson's collection, is also given by Berenson, and by others, to Catena. The Virgin and Joseph are, as one sees at first sight, the same figures as in the two preceding works. I will not unfold the argument again. The picture is to be attributed to Giorgione for the same reasons that show the two other pictures to be his. One proof may be added to those adduced before, and this is the pebbly surface of the ground. The same treatment is to be seen in the Judgment of Solomon, and the Trial of Moses, in the Uffizi, in the Three Philosophers, in the Giovanelli Landscape; and in this last picture the painting of the brick work below the column is the same as that of the building beside which the Holy Family are seated in Mr. Benson's picture. Catena could as easily have painted Bellini's Loredano as this head of St. Joseph, as fine a head in its grandeur of mould and simple earnestness of expression as was ever given to this too often maligned Saint. It is a Giorgione, and a fine one.

The picture of Christ carrying the Cross in the Church of San Rocco in Venice is by Morelli<sup>1</sup> said to be "gewiss ein ganz frühes Werk" of Titian. Considering that he does not give a single proof of this assertion, we may be forgiven if we fail to see the *Gewissheit* of the attribution. It is true that Vasari was not sure whether Giorgione or Titian was the author, but tradition, as can be traced by guide books, certainly leads us to consider the former as the author. The condition of the picture is such that it gives one no help in solving the problem, but so far as the drawing of details goes we meet no contradiction of the traditional authorship. The shape of the head of the Christ and the drawing of the eyes and brow

<sup>1</sup> *Die Galerie zu Dresden*, p. 297, n.

are met with in the certain works. In believing this ruined picture to be by our master, I am following the opinion held by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, and in more recent days by Berenson.

The difficulties that are met in trying to discover a decisive proof of the origin of the Knight of Malta are similar to those which confuse the argument about the 'Christ' of San Rocco. The picture has been so maltreated that there is little left to study but the shadow of the original. A magnificent original it must have been, one of those rare works, commoner in Venice than elsewhere, that truly make the corporal substance conform to the nature of the hidden soul, so that one thinks not so much of the person shown to us as of his manner of thought and life. There is much about the portrait that makes its attribution to any one but Giorgione next to impossible, and nothing, I believe, that throws any doubt in the way of our considering him the author. He was capable of such a portrait, and in its earlier days it was unquestionably worthy of him. This is, of course, the usual opinion, though Crowe and Cavalcaselle felt that the repainting had so altered the work as to destroy its character.

The Head of Christ bearing the Cross, formerly in Vicenza, and now, fortunately for our country, in Boston, is another of the works the authorship of which cannot be absolutely proved, but of which the character is so marked that there is little or no diversity of opinion about it.<sup>1</sup> It is one

<sup>1</sup> The inaccurate copy in the Rovigo Gallery is a wretched daub that is not worth preserving. There are other poor replicas of the picture; one owned by Count Lanckoronski in Vienna is considered by Venturi to be the original. The other picture in the Rovigo Gallery (No. 11), sometimes spoken of in the same breath with Giorgione's name, is equally worthless. It is nothing but a wretched copy of the head of the Vienna David.

of the pictures that Crowe and Cavalcaselle thought worthy of Giorgione, and which since their day Morelli and others have not hesitated to regard as his. Still strongly tinged with the influence of Bellini, it contains the promise of a freer, broader treatment of religious subjects than even Bellini had attained, and shows us unquestionably the young Giorgione. The hand and eye of Bellini guide him as he works, but his own genius cannot be utterly suppressed, and he adds to his master's style something that marks the picture, when it leaves his easel, as the true expression of a great genius and not as that of a merely facile and unoriginal pupil (Plate LXVII).

Closely connected with the Madonna of Castelfranco is the study for the figure of San Liberale in the National Gallery. It is true that such studies by the fifteenth-century Italian masters are extremely uncommon, but the differences between this study and the large picture are such as we can hardly imagine being introduced by a copyist, and the painting, considered solely from the technical point of view, is so masterly that we are, I believe, justified in considering the figure as the product of Giorgione's brush.

Of the six pictures (Pitti, Concert, and Nymph with Satyr; Louvre, Fête Champêtre, and Madonna and Saints; Hampton Court, Shepherd; Madrid, Madonna with Sta. Brigida) which, though traditionally ascribed to Giorgione, Crowe and Cavalcaselle refused to consider as his, the Madonna and Sta. Brigida and the Madonna and Saints in the Louvre are now less often thought of in connection with his name.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The picture in Madrid is by Titian; the one in the Louvre is said by Crowe and Cavalcaselle to be by Pellegrino da San Daniele, while Berenson attributes it to Cariani.





PLATE LXVI.





Of the Madonna and Saints in the Louvre it is interesting to note that even a century ago there were those who judged the work at its true value. It is of this work, I believe, that J. B. P. Lebrun <sup>1</sup> says: (p. 71) "Attribué au Giorgion. Un Concert de figures vues à mi-crops et de grandeur naturelle, très-mauvais ouvrage dans le genre de cette école, d'environ 4 pieds et demi de hauteur, sur 6 de largeur, sur toile. Je tairai ce qu'en dit Lalande. Vient de Milan, bibliothèque Ambrosienne."

Concerning the four other pictures there is considerable diversity of opinion. The Head of a Boy at Hampton Court is thought by Morelli to be an original Giorgione, but as the light was bad when he saw the work, he is not sure. Berenson, however, does not doubt the genuineness of the picture. Considering the fact that the head is a copy of the Vienna David, we may very seriously question whether it is by Giorgione. One can scarcely suppose that he would have repeated his pictures and made the head of his David answer for a Shepherd. Morelli was right in recognising the Giorgionesque spirit of the work, but it is only a copy of the head of the original David, with certain details altered.

The Nymph and Satyr <sup>2</sup> in the Pitti, which used to be called a Giorgione and which Crowe and Cavalcaselle thought to be by some imitator of him and of Titian, bears now, I believe, the name of Dosso Dossi. Morelli considered it a youthful work of Giorgione, though it certainly shows few signs

<sup>1</sup> Examen | Historique et Critique | Des Tableaux | Exposées Provisoirement | Venant des premier et second envoies de Milan, Crémone, Parme, Plaisance, Modène, Cento et Bologne, auquel on a joint le détail de tous les Monumens des Arts qui sont arrivés d'Italie. — An VI<sup>e</sup> de la Republique.

<sup>2</sup> A good replica is in the Corsini Gallery, Florence.

of youth, and the Giorgionesque details which he enumerates are exactly those which an imitator would easily acquire. The idea and the energetic freedom of composition are more like the work of men who came after Giorgione, and the colouring is unlike his. We have no reason to believe that he ever painted subjects embodying just such trivially sensual and commonplace ideas, and as there is no marked and characteristic likeness in the figures to any of his known works, it is safer to consider it the product of a would-be imitator, such as we know Dosso Dossi to have been.

To decide the question of the Concert in the Pitti is by no means easy. Crowe and Cavalcaselle felt sure it could not be by Giorgione, or else that "he did not execute what we are fond of attributing to him," for it seemed to them more advanced and to surpass his true works. Morelli, too, did not regard Giorgione as the author, but the youthful Titian,<sup>1</sup> and to this Berenson agrees. The interrelation of the complex sensations expressed in the deeply moved but quiet faces is certainly more like the work of the painter of the Two Loves than that of him of the Three Philosophers. The likeness, too, of the middle figure in the Concert to the Man with the Glove in the Louvre — a likeness found not only in the expression of the two heads, but also in the wonderfully wrought modelling of them — is most noticeable. How the same artist can have accomplished so dull and stupid a face as the one to the left is a question only to be answered by the vandals who have repainted and thereby ruined this very splendid work. It certainly does remind one of Giorgione, but so does the Two Loves. Titian we know well was, in his early days,

<sup>1</sup> *Die Galerie zu Dresden*, p. 276.

much influenced by his fellow-worker, but we know also that he became the more accomplished artist of the two and attained a power of technique and of representation of facial expression beyond that of his too early dead contemporary. As just such an artist is shown us in the Concert, one can but agree with Morelli in regarding it as the work of Titian — as one of his finest, for he rarely reached such mastery of subtle expression as shown in the central figure.

I come now to the discussion of a picture so well known that I feel scarcely justified in doing more than simply express my opinion of it, but the picture is so important that I must be excused for arguing about it in close detail. It is the *Fête Champêtre* in the Louvre; a picture which almost every one unhesitatingly attributes to Giorgione, but which I cannot believe to be by him and think can have been painted only some years after his death. As in regard to other true or false Giorgiones, the opinion held by Crowe and Cavalcaselle is worthy of more attention than later writers have seen fit to give it. What the former say about the picture is this:

“We cannot say that Giorgione would not have painted such a scene; but, as far as we know, he would have treated it with more nobleness of sentiment, without defects of form or neglect of nature’s finenesses, without the pasty surface and sombre glow of tone which here is all pervading: he would have given more brightness and variety to his landscape.”

They were surely not far wrong when they suggested some imitator of Sebastiano del Piombo as the painter. There is certainly a Giorgionesque quality in the scene, but that only means that the painter puts before our eyes the varied and mingled charms of green fields enlivened with the faint mur-

mur of shepherds tending their distant flocks, of woods and rivers, and of strong men and lovely women making music beside a fountain overhung by trees. It used to be the fashion <sup>1</sup> to call every portrait of a dark-eyed man with long abundant locks by Giorgione's name, and those who believed in such things also thought that he was the only painter of *Fêtes Champêtres*.

We may freely concede that Giorgione did do much to introduce and skilfully display a class of subjects that had been little cared for until this day. But he was not the only artist to feel the charm of such scenes. Sedate Bellini himself showed in such a picture as the *Bacchanal* in Alnwick Castle that he too felt them, and rapidly they became more and more common. But in the earlier years of this development such scenes were generally given on a small scale or else were intended to illustrate, even though in many cases the clue is lost to us, some more distinct and concisely expressable idea than mere Arcadian life among the trees. It is not alone the emptiness of thought that forces us to decide upon some later author than Giorgione for this work. Forms of details, manner of design and method of painting, all are different from his certain works.

The first thing that strikes the attention is that the soft, dull drawing of the figures, and the clumsy, baggy modelling of the women, is unlike anything found in any of the undoubted Giorgiones.<sup>2</sup> Compare the delicate shape and clear drawing of the figures in the Uffizi panels, or the *Venus* or the *Gypsy*, with these heavy, ill-proportioned, clumsily

<sup>1</sup> And still is in some galleries, as Hampton Court.

<sup>2</sup> The picture has been much restored, but the faults pointed out here are not due to the restorer.



posed figures, and then say if you think Giorgione could have sunk so low. Or, if you will seek proof in fingers and toes, hands and feet, where in Giorgione's work are such a shapeless leathery ear, so thick-lipped a mouth, so short-toed and thick a foot, or such spidery hands to be found? Nowhere. Look at the landscape. The trees are much more massy and less flat and feathery, their surface is more broken by flickering spots of light, they show, in fact, a more advanced stage in the rendering of the appearance of Nature, than is shown in Giorgione's work.

It is instructive to notice, too, the way that the grass is painted in the foreground, the thick mat of it, and the long bright blades and tufts. Giorgione never reached such realism as that, as you can see by the primitive way in which he seeks to render the effect in the picture of the Gypsy. Consider further the treatment of the sunlight as it floats over the hillsides and glows among the trees. In the *Castelfranco Madonna*, in the *Three Philosophers*, in the *Gypsy*, in the *Beaumont Shepherd's Offering*, large, smooth, unbroken surfaces of light and shade, seeming almost more like some woven stuff than rough earth, are contrasted, but here all is broken, enriched perhaps, but less simple and less telling.

In and out by the river and over the hill, Nature's wrinkles are embossed by the soft light, and nowhere is there restful certainty of sun or shadow. In among the trees behind the shepherd, the hot, misty light that one sees only in the forest is radiant with summer colour and seems to murmur with the voice of the woods. Such effects were unknown to Giorgione, but they were not unknown to Titian, for he was the first great

landscapist, and in the *Vierge au Lapin* and the other *Virgin* seated under the trees, which used to hang opposite in the Long Gallery of the Louvre, we see exactly these technical peculiarities and these effects of nature done with the sure stroke of the master. Not only has the author of the *Fête Champêtre* followed Titian in these ways, but his thick pasty colour is taken from him. Not a stroke of this picture displays original talent, there is not one that resembles Giorgione, not one that does not betray the skilful imitator of ideas and manner of other well-known men, chiefly of Titian.

But to make assurance doubly sure, something remains to be pointed out that even if all the rest could be accommodated to what we know of Giorgione, would render it incredible that he should be the author. Morelli and others have noted the curious similarity between the two musicians and certain figures in one of Titian's frescoes in Padua. One cannot say that Titian would not have taken hints from Giorgione, but he was scarcely the man to need any one's suggestions, especially if it was in the shape of such commonplace figures as these. There are those, however, who think he did. But now let me add that the two women bear the most striking and unquestionable likeness to the two women in Tintoretto's (?) *Rescue* in Dresden, though they have lost the purity of Tintoretto's figures. Surely no one will maintain that this at best only fanciful and pretty, but in no way striking, *Fête Champêtre* was the source of inspiration to the two greatest Venetian painters in their days of prime and finished power? It is impossible. The idea must be given up, and though there is no denying the charm of the musicians under the trees, let us cast the scales from our eyes and recognise its complete

dissimilarity to the work of the Master of Castelfranco, and that it is merely a perfectly charming *pasticcio*.

I have now discussed the pictures spoken of by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, and there are left for us to consider those to which Morelli first drew marked attention. Such are the Madonna with Sts. Antony and Roch in Madrid, Daphne and Apollo in Venice, Three Ages of Man in the Uffizi, Birth of Paris and Portrait of a Man in Buda-Pesth, Portrait of a Woman in the Borghese Gallery, Portrait of a Youth in Berlin, Allegory in Dresden, and Judith in St. Petersburg. I have already spoken of the Venus, Nymph and Satyr, and the Shepherd at Hampton Court.

The Madonna in Madrid has generally been called by the name of Pordenone, while Crowe and Cavalcaselle thought it by Francesco Vecelli. It is certainly not a Giorgione, but a mere *pasticcio* like the Fête Champêtre. We cannot be blamed for asking some more decisive evidence of its Giorgionesque origin than Morelli gives before we agree with him. He satisfies himself with saying<sup>1</sup> "Doch ich muss gestehen, dass es für mich keine geringe Freude war, bei meinem Besuche von Madrid dieses Wunderwerk venetianischer Malerkunst sogleich als Schöpfung unsers Giorgione erkannt zu haben."

This, on the surface, is too rapid and absolute a statement to be admitted without question, and as there are excellent reasons why Giorgione could not have painted the work, we may confidently strike it from the list. The composition in the main is borrowed from the picture at Castelfranco. Giorgione was hardly the man to repeat his own works. The

<sup>1</sup> *Die Galerie zu Dresden*, p. 282. A copy of the picture is at Hampton Court.

heavy, thick, coarse painting is absolutely different from Giorgione's work. The clumsy draperies show none of his fine feeling. The thick-set figures of the Saints do not exhibit his elegance and refinement of form. The infant, more like a Hercules than a Christ, is quite unlike his poetic and dreamy-looking children. The manner in which the foot of St. Roch is raised is awkward and unmeaning, while the fat hands, thick ears and coarse features bear no resemblance to Giorgione's work. The work is not only crude, it is unintelligent. The wall behind the Virgin cannot be explained, the chiaroscuro is harsh, the attitude of St. Anthony, turning as he does from the main group, is senseless, and the flowers are scattered about in a childish way. It is based on Giorgione's work, but must have been painted by an inferior artist many years after his death.

The Daphne and Apollo in Venice has been injured by repainting and by having lost the left-hand end, but one can easily see that it will take much more than a mere assertion by Morelli<sup>1</sup> to convince anyone that Giorgione painted it. Crowe and Cavalcaselle think the painter was probably Andrea Schiavoni. If it was not Schiavoni, it was someone of an almost precisely similar nature and talent. The generally loose drawing and painting remind one of him. The bad drawing and perspective, the proportions and shapes of the figures (note the chunky Apollo drawing his bow and the head of the woman in the middle distance), the clawlike hands and clumsy feet, and the stupid confusion of scale in which the figures are drawn, all show without any possibility of question, that neither Giorgione nor any other artist of the first rank painted the picture.

<sup>1</sup> *Die Galerie zu Dresden*, p. 282.





PLATE LXVII.





There are in Padua two other cassone pictures representing the fables of Myrrha and of Erysichthon as told by Ovid in the "Metamorphoses" (VIII fab. 7 and X fab. 9). They are Giorgionesque in feeling, but are plainly derived from the woodcuts in the 1497 Venice edition of Ovid (Cf. Justi, *Giorgione* p. 191 f). It is possible that these are two of the pictures referred to by Ridolfi (see above, No. 19).

Of the Three Ages it is perhaps sufficient to say that Morelli's attribution has not found general acceptance.

The Allegory in Dresden in times gone by has been and by some still is considered, as Morelli thought, a copy of a work by Giorgione. There is, I believe, no real evidence in favour of this theory, which seems to me to depend solely on personal feeling.

The Judith in St. Petersburg, where it goes by the name of Moretto, presents a more difficult problem. Morelli, though he seems to have had no doubt that Giorgione was the painter, was not sure whether the picture was a copy or not. That it is a copy is Berenson's opinion.<sup>1</sup> The lack of modelling and the bad drawing of parts are the reasons why Berenson and others think it a copy, and Berenson finds a trace of copyist's work in the fact that the head is better done than the rest of the figure. Personally, I do not recognise this superiority of the head, and considering the numerous faults which he points out, I do not understand his last sentence: "En somme, la *Judith* de l'Ermitage me parait une bonne copie, mais après

<sup>1</sup> *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, Oct. 1897, p. 270. Berenson in this suggestive article has mixed ecstatic and girlish talk inextricably with sound argument. In his criticism of the Judith he says: "Il faudrait le talent d'un poète de premier ordre pour exprimer dans la plénitude tout ce qu'on devine dans la *Judith* de Saint Pétersbourg." True, but though such sentiments fill the page, they do not have the same effect on our mind as the picture.

tout, ce n'est qu'une copie." If one believes these numerous faults to be due to the copyist, I should say that they proved it to be a pretty poor copy. Study of the work itself will, however, convince anyone that it is not a copy, but the original picture, and the artist can be no other than Giorgione. The panel on which it was painted was originally broader on the right side.<sup>1</sup> The uncertain drawing is what one would expect to find in an early work. The drapery is not so simple as usual in its folds, and at first sight the way it is drawn aside, leaving one leg bare, seems affected. But when one thinks of the bleeding head on the ground, this action is seen to be natural and the contrast of nude and draped parts is of the same unexpected and original character as one sees in the woman of the Giovanelli picture.

The fragment in Buda-Pesth which Morelli thought was part of the picture representing the Birth of Paris is, as Berenson points out in the article already referred to, only a copy, and a poor one at that. But even poor copies of lost Giorgiones are works to be carefully cherished.

Morelli also thought he knew of three portraits by Giorgione. Of these three (the Woman in the Borghese, the Man in the Buda-Pesth Gallery, and the Youth in Berlin), the first two may be seriously questioned. To my eye the Borghese portrait is by no means so strikingly Giorgionesque as Morelli considered it. While it is true that a brow here and a mouth there can be found scattered among the figures in the true Giorgiones that resemble the features of this woman, the type of face shows little likeness to Giorgione's work. Nor does the muddy colour indicate the palette of an artist

<sup>1</sup> See the engraving published by Justi in his *Giorgione*.

of more than mediocre ability. Who will look at Giorgione's masterpieces and then say he thinks the same artist produced two such shapeless hands holding such a formless swab of cloth? Have we any reason to think Giorgione had so poor an understanding of perspective as to be unable to draw correctly the line of the parting of the hair? Such sloping shoulders were never natural and the fashion of drawing them so is not characteristic of Giorgione's work. Could not Giorgione paint better drapery, or would he ever have been satisfied with such a shoelace-like ribbon round the waist? Finally, were such gauze caps known in Giorgione's day? It is the purest fancy that discovers a shadow of greatness in this dull work. Drawing, colour, design, all proclaim it the product of a commonplace artist. The work is unlike Giorgione's in every particular except the shape of the brow.

Morelli's judgment about the portrait in Buda-Pesth is a perfectly sound one. It occurs only in the English translation and not in the original German.<sup>1</sup> "The picture," he says, "has suffered much, and the master is not to be recognised in the technical qualities of the painting, but the whole feeling . . . and the conception seem to point to Giorgione. The impression which it made upon me ten years ago was that of a thoroughly Giorgionesque work, but one executed by a later hand rather than by the master himself. Competent critics who have examined the picture in the meantime insist, however, that it is a true original by Giorgione. I must leave the final decision of the point to others." Unfortunately it is next to impossible to arrive at final decisions in such matters. For one, I

<sup>1</sup> *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of their Works*. By Giovanni Morelli. *The Galleries of Munich and Dresden*. Translated by C. J. Ffoulkes (London, 1893), p. 218.

believe that Morelli's idea, that the work was executed by a follower of Giorgione, is borne out by its main characteristics, particularly by the self-conscious pose of the head, and by the gesture of the hand — both much like what is found in portraits by the men of the generation after Giorgione.

Then, too, the cold ashen colour is very unlike Giorgione's palette, but I would not lay great weight on this fact as the picture has been much repainted. The picture is of further interest because it shows the fallacy of one of Morelli's most firm statements. In the Introduction <sup>1</sup> to his chapters on the Borghese Gallery he says: "Ich erlaube mir bei dieser Gelegenheit sogar zu bemerken, dass die den *grossen Meistern* eigenthümliche *Grundform* der Hand und des Ohres nicht nur auf ihren Bildern, sondern selbst auf den von ihnen nach dem Leben gemalten Porträts sich vorfindet." With these words in one's mind one looks at the Buda-Pesth portrait and finds neither hand, ear, eye, nose or mouth exhibiting the *Grundform* shown in the unquestioned pictures. Morelli was carried away by his theories in this point, for while every one will readily admit that many cases, especially among the works of the primitive and early masters, can be found to fit his rule, yet the numberless exceptions to this rule, particularly among the fully developed masters, make it quite plain that, at best, its application requires to be strictly limited.<sup>2</sup>

The Portrait of a Youth at Berlin is the last of the Morel-

<sup>1</sup> *Die Galerien Borghese und Doria-Pamfili in Rom* (Leipzig, 1890), p. 99, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Not only did Morelli weaken his writings by exaggeration — which, however, was quite natural — but in the less excusable way of giving illustrations that are misleading. The woodcuts which serve to show the *Grundform* of hands and ears are only partially exact, and in one case, the Bonifazio ear, a positive caricature. The process cuts of the paintings are too miserable to consider. This is unfortunately as true of the translations as of the original editions.



lian Giorgiones to be studied. As was too often the case, Morelli speaks off-hand of this work as "ein glänzendes Porträt des Giorgione," as though it was so manifestly by him that he was absolved from the labour of adducing proof; but the matter is not so simple. It is surely enough Giorgionesque, but do the details bear out the general impression so strongly as to make the attribution beyond all reasonable doubt? Not one of the master's certain works shows a head like this. It is sharper and harder than anything of his except the Uffizi panels, but between these, sharp and hard as they seem to have been, and the Berlin portrait, there is an important and essential difference. The figures on the panels are not only hard, they are stiff; that is, they show one of the chief characteristics of youthful work.<sup>1</sup> If now the portrait be by Giorgione, it is self-evidently an early work. That is, there are among his undoubted works some that show vastly greater ease than this. But this portrait does not show any stiffness.

The attitude is easy, and the painting, particularly of the drapery, is distinctly free, one might even say sketchy. The work shows, perhaps, not so much the characteristics of a young artist of great power as those of one who has attained some facility but not the complete and all-round ease of the greatest masters. Then what do the letters V. V. mean, painted on the shelf behind which the figure stands? Is it not possible they are the initial letters of the artist's name?

<sup>1</sup> Nothing shows better the distinction between the work of the Renaissance and that of to-day than the fact that the careful training to which the earlier artists were accustomed led them to produce in their youthful and undeveloped period finished works and sketches that are stiff, whereas nowadays the majority of the works of young artists show not so much stiffness as laxity. The one developed from hardness to easy restraint, the other advances from looseness to a mastery generally much less even.

Can they stand for an as yet unknown imitator, another *Vincentius Venezianus*? As Morelli said of the Portrait in Buda-Pesth, "I must leave the final decision of the point to others" — others better qualified than myself. Whoever the artist, the picture is a splendid one, and may well be regarded as showing the Giorgione point of view in portraiture, which, however, is a very different matter from being a work by him.

I have already had occasion to refer to an article by Berenson in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in which he speaks of pictures he considers as copies of lost Giorgiones. These are :

The David in Vienna.

The Judith in St. Petersburg.

The Birth of Paris in Buda-Pesth.

Orpheus and Eurydice, a cassone at Bergamo.

Portrait of a Man, formerly in the Doetsch collection.

Portrait of a Lady, belonging to Signor Crespi at Milan.

Of the first three I have already spoken. To maintain his thesis about the Orpheus and Eurydice, Berenson mentions only vague sentiments such as "Qui donc, autre que lui, a su traduire, comme nous le voyons ici, un mythe grec dans l'esprit de la Renaissance?" We might reply that Bellini, Titian, Tintoret, to mention merely Venetians, all showed a rather marked ability to do this very thing, so it was not a personal peculiarity of Giorgione. "Qui donc, autre que lui, avait le don de fondre le paysage et les figures dans une aussi charmante harmonie?" Again the ability to do this was possessed by many artists, and so vague a phrase as *aussi charmante* proves nothing whatever. Continuing, he finds many details which betray very certainly the work of Cariani (an undoubted imitator of Giorgione), and decides that the work is a copy by Cariani of a lost Giorgione. But when

much is admittedly unlike Giorgione and everything suits Cariani, why not consider Cariani the artist? Apparently because "si nous étions nous-même des artistes très doués, nous pourrions remplacer chaque détail *carianesque* par un détail *giorgionesque*, emprunté aux œuvres du maître les plus voisines." This has no force. We might as well "remplacer chaque détail *carianesque* par un détail *michelangelesque*," and what would be shown thereby? Nothing.

The reasons given for believing the Portrait from the Doetsch collection <sup>1</sup> to be a copy of a Giorgione are quite as vague and undefinable as those for the Orpheus and Eurydice. The consideration of details is no more convincing than the sentiments and fanciful writing that precede. "Si l'auteur de l'original en question n'était pas Giorgione, ce devrait être quelque imitateur servile du maître, comme Licinio ou Beccaruzzi. Mais ces peintres de second ordre ne pouvaient qu'imiter et non créer, et le portrait de la collection Doetsch est bien une création," and yet he has just said that this portrait "est le même type que celui du jeune homme de Buda-Pesth," — the picture mentioned by Morelli. Berenson's definition of 'création' must differ from that ordinarily employed; and Licinio at his best was not so uncreative as Berenson would have us believe. He gives one, however, further surprises in asserting that this portrait agrees in all details with the one in Berlin! Not only the same head and brow, but "le même sentiment dans la bouche!"

Even were this all so, and I cannot see that it is in the least, what would be proved? To compare one doubtful work to another of a similar nature does not, as I have said above,

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced in the *Burlington Magazine*, 1895-6, p. 338.

prove the authorship of either. Furthermore, though one can find strong likenesses to the Berlin head in the true works by Giorgione, in these same works one cannot find any likeness whatever to the Doetsch portrait. To compare this overemphasised portrait, this person who seems half brigand and half Shylock, to the sad, poetical-looking man at Buda-Pesth, or to the clean, vigorous, manly youth in Berlin, is going pretty far, and the limit is plainly overstepped in the endeavour to attach to the picture a value it does not possess by giving to it the name of one of the greatest artists.

For the painter of the Crespi Portrait of a Lady we shall do better to look in the direction of Titian than Giorgione. The owner, Signor Crespi, believes, according to Berenson, that Titian was the author, and certainly the likeness which the figure bears to other women by Titian, and the initials T. V. make it difficult to admit any other origin. Neither ecstasies nor comparisons serve to show any likeness to Giorgione's work.

Of all the portraits attributed to Giorgione the finest by far is the one owned by the Hon. Edward Wood of Temple Newsam. Attention was first drawn to this by Cook and his attribution has been accepted by every one. It is a masterpiece of the greatest beauty (Plate LXVIII).

We have now reviewed the most important criticisms that have been passed on Giorgione's work ; and though it is only too evident that as yet there is no really sound common standard by which to govern our judgments, we can come very near to forming one if we accept the more sober part of the work of these criticisms and disregard their more extravagant and





PLATE LXVIII.





hypothetical attributions.<sup>1</sup> The following list, I venture to think, embraces works differing much less among themselves in regard to style than the lists of the critics that I have discussed.

1. Vienna — David (copy).
2. Venice — Fondaco dei Tedeschi (fragment still visible, but compare Zanetti's engraving).
3. Venice — Chiesa di San Rocco, Christ carrying the Cross (much damaged).
4. Venice, Giovanelli Palace, Soldier and Woman, known as The Tempest.
5. Castelfranco, Madonna Enthroned.
6. Dresden, Venus.
7. Kingston Lacy, Judgment of Solomon (unfinished).
8. Vienna, Three Philosophers.
9. Buda-Pesth, Birth of Paris (fragment of a copy).
10. Florence, Uffizi, Judgment of Solomon.
11. Florence, Uffizi, Fire-test of Moses.
12. Florence, Uffizi, Knight of Malta.
13. Boston, Mass., Mrs. Gardner's Collection (formerly Vicenza), Head of Christ.
14. London, National Gallery, Study for the San Liberale of the Castelfranco picture.
15. London, National Gallery, Epiphany.
16. London, Mr. Benson, Holy Family.
17. London, Lord Allandale, Shepherd's Offering.
18. Temple Newsam, Hon. Mr. Wood. Portrait of a Man.
19. St. Petersburg, Judith.
20. Berlin, Portrait of a Youth (?).

Excluding the last one as being open to doubt, nineteen pictures, two probably copies, remain as our heritage of this most noble painter's work. With these nineteen in our mind, it becomes more evident than ever why such works as the Louvre Concert, the Borghese Lady, or the

<sup>1</sup>The reason I have not discussed in detail the list given by Cook in his book on Giorgione (London, 1904) and in various articles in the *Burlington Magazine* (1905-1906) and *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (1902) is due to no careless disregard of his work but to the fact that his point of view in regard to Giorgione and the principles of criticism are so utterly dissimilar to mine that no good would be gained from pointing out in detail my disagreement with his judgment.

Doetsch Man are not to be thought of in connection with Giorgione's name.

There yet remains something more to be said of Giorgione. I think that there are still some pictures to be added to this list. The first to which I desire to call attention is the so-called Gypsy Madonna in Vienna. This picture is spoken of by every one as a Titian, but the longer I study it the more strong becomes my conviction that Giorgione was the artist; that it is one of his early works; that it is one of the "many pictures of the Virgin" of which Vasari speaks. The Giorgione spirit seems to me to underlie the whole feeling just as the Giorgione technique underlies the completed performance, that is, wherever the repainting allows it to be seen (Plate LXIX).

Evidently, from the lack of decision of the drawing, the coarse modelling of the drapery, and the heavy, undetailed landscape the picture is an early work of the master, be he Titian or Giorgione. To my mind the likeness between this and unquestioned early Titians is a superficial one. This picture shows none of the ease that is a characteristic of even his early works, nor does it exhibit any of the dramatic quality, expressed either by the actions or in the faces of the figures, that is another most noticeable feature of his work. If, on the other hand, one seeks for similarities to Giorgione's work, they are most readily found. Details and style coincide closely with his pictures. The shape of the Virgin's head and the manner in which the hair is drawn over the brow are nearly identical with what one sees in the Uffizi panels or the Castelfranco picture. The sharply marked eyelids, the richly modelled mouth and long nose, are strongly resemblant



PLATE LXIX.





to the same features in the Castelfranco Madonna, the Giovannelli Gypsy, the Uffizi panels, and the Knight of Malta.

Notice, too, the large hand, the feet of the child with the strongly developed toes which are just what one finds in Giorgione's works. So, also, the landscape with its plumelike trees, and the slim figure seated on the grass is such as one finds in many of his works, but not so often in those of Titian. Finally, and of more importance than separate details, is the fact that the peaceful spirit of the group, the undramatic, un-Titianesque quality, is exactly what is most characteristic of Giorgione. Titian, when he painted the Christ Child, even in his earliest days, painted a figure more representing the infant Hercules than the Salvator Mundi. Invariably, He leaps about in his Mother's arms, and though the small chubby face may be keenly intelligent, there is hardly ever a suggestion of the imaginative powers and prophetic instinct of the Reformer. It is here that Giorgione shows his very exceptional genius, for he was able to depict a purely human man child in such wise that were the figures cut from his canvases, no one could mistake them for mere ordinary offspring.

Giorgione used none of the affected graces or sentimentalities of Raphael, nor did he depend upon such weirdness as Leonardo chose; as a result, his figures are as much more satisfying to the inquiring intellect as a living fountain is compared with the mirage of the desert. His means are simple. There is no exaggeration of action, as in the Titian Child, but all is essentially delicate and infantine. There is no exaggeration of expression, but a slightly dreamy, far-away look as of powers still unawakened, and one feels, as before no other representations of the Child, that such as He might

attain to even Calvary. Taken in connection with the agreement of the details, this spiritual similarity of the work to others that we know are by Giorgione must give him pause who should think to name Titian as the author.<sup>1</sup>

Another picture which, I believe, deserves more attention than has yet been given it hangs, under the name of Giovanni Bellini, in the *Museo Correr* in Venice. The picture represents the dead Christ, seated on the edge of the tomb, upheld by three angels. In the background is a landscape, with a church on the right. It is painted on a panel about four feet high. The Anonimo Morelli says that in the year 1530 in the house of Gabriel Vendramin: "El Cristo morto sopra el sepolcro, con l'Anzolo che el sostenta, fu de man de Zorzi da Castelfranco, reconzato da Tiziano." The picture in the Correr Museum represents this same scene, but there are three angels instead of one. This difference between the picture and the description need not make us hesitate to consider the question whether Giorgione was the author of the work, if there are other reasons to render such authorship possible.

Any one, however, who has used early books such as the Anonimo knows how very inaccurate the authors often were and any one who has studied Italian painting knows that to represent the dead Christ held by only one angel is entirely contrary to precedent and practice. The present condition

<sup>1</sup> Since writing the above I have been pleased to have Signor Venturi tell me that he, too, considered the work to be by Giorgione. He does not agree with me about the Benson, Beaumont and National Gallery Holy Families, but he does not share the Catena theory of their origin. His full views will unquestionably be propounded in his forthcoming edition of Vasari's *Life of Giorgione*. Cook also thinks this Virgin is by Giorgione. Venturi's views on Giorgione are indicated in the *Galleria Crespi*, p. 133 f.

of the work is such that it is impossible to say whether it was ever *raconzato da Tiziano* or not. It is a mere wreck. That there are distinct resemblances to Bellini's work is not to be denied, but, if I mistake not, there exist even stronger ones to that of Giorgione. A slight stiffness in drawing, a certain archaism in drapery, is just what one would expect to find in the work of Bellini's pupil. In the modelling and action of the figures, however, there are evidences of an attempt at freedom of design such as are rare in Bellini's work. Four works of Bellini occur at once as criteria for judging the quality of the one under discussion — the *Pietà* in the Brera, one in the Mond collection in London, one in Rimini, and one in the Berlin Gallery.<sup>1</sup> None of these show the slender, rather unmodelled hands of the Correr picture; none presents so vivid a picture of Death. In none except the one at Rimini are the secondary figures really supporting the Christ, — the body does not show, as in the Correr picture, the relaxation of death, and in the Rimini picture the angels are much more playfully treated than in the Correr panel. The Bellini pictures are deeply touching, but to me there seems an even nobler and more moving sentiment in the work which I fain would attribute to Giorgione, and it is just such a sentiment as the painter of the *Vicenza Christ* might have suggested.

The heads of the figures of the dead Christ in the works of Bellini are without exception represented as *asleep*. In the Correr picture one sees more than sleep in the closed eyes and drawn mouth of the Saviour. There is death — but death, the tragedy, so combined with a yearning, soul-compelling

<sup>1</sup> I leave out the one with the forged monogram of Albert Dürer in the Correr Museum, for it is, I believe, by no means sure that Bellini was the painter.

sadness, that the face can never be forgotten by whoso once has seen it, and this is spiritual life. Scarcely any other artist ever equalled Giorgione, and none certainly ever surpassed him, in the power of representing the members of the Holy Family. There are many fine presentations of Christ bearing the Cross, but none so imaginative as the Vicenza picture. For there we see in the sensitive face, the direct eye, and steady earnest mouth, the signs of completed power over self, while in the tear drop that sparkles on the cheek is the sign of suffering that broke the body, whose soul it could not quell — for neither brow nor eye are those of one who weeps. The Correr painting contains a similar double suggestion. Two details there are also which bear out the idea that Giorgione is the author. One is the technique which so far as can be seen is of the rich, smooth, carefully shaded kind, peculiar to Giorgione's work. The other is the landscape in which the low horizon line and the plummy trees correspond closely to his certain works. Wreck though it be, and possibly only a copy of the original, it is worth study by students.<sup>1</sup>

A smaller, but fortunately much more perfectly preserved, work hangs in the London Gallery under the name of School of Giorgione. It represents a bearded man on a throne and other figures in an open landscape. Whoever, unafraid of finding something unexpected, looks at this picture with critical eye, will, I think, realise that it is not a school work, but by the master himself. It is very carefully wrought in design and

<sup>1</sup> Before the earthquake I saw in the Gallery at Messina a picture by Antonello da Messina the composition of which is practically identical with, and must be the origin of, the Correr panel. Whether the Messina picture still exists or was destroyed I do not know.



execution, as a youthful work would be likely to be, and as the two Florence panels are. The rich clear colours and the bright sunshine spread over the scene, are such as are found in the Florence panels, the Kingston Lacy picture, those in Vienna, and the Virgin of Castelfranco. The landscape is typically Giorgionesque, closed in as it is in the foreground, and opening into a middle distance of rich meadows, enlivened here and there with tall steep-roofed houses. The rich detail and broad chiaroscuro find their counterpart over and over again in Giorgione's work; and finally, who but Giorgione ever presented to our delighted eyes a scene so simple, so dream-like, so poetic, so defined, and yet so difficult to understand? It is a dream picture, rendered with the utmost clearness of vision. It is only the masters who can do this — only Giorgione and Keats and such rare spirits who can put in terms for the ordinary plodding mortal to grasp, the evanescent visions of the mind.

Of very different character is the portrait of a youth in a large hat in the Vienna Gallery. Crowe and Cavalcaselle attribute this to *Morto da Feltre*. It was impossible for me to see the original when I was in Vienna, but study of an excellent photograph makes me doubt this attribution. If I mistake not, the picture might be a copy of a portrait by Giorgione. The treatment of the landscape is sufficient to show that Giorgione's hand did not touch the work itself, but scarcely any other than Giorgione can have originated this grave sweet face with the steady eyes.

To close this necessarily unsatisfactory part of my subject, there is the etching by H. van der Borcht which quite possibly is copied from a lost Giorgione. It represents a woman



seated upon a dead warrior, and below the figures are the words *Giorgione inv.*<sup>1</sup> It seems not unlikely that it preserves for us one of the frescoes long since faded from some palace wall in Venice. It is but the echo of a voice that is still, but even as such it means much.

If now my arguments, in the foregoing discussion, are based upon sound reason rather than upon theory, it results that the following are the works by which we must judge Giorgione's genius, and that these must serve as a standard for further study of his work :

1. Vienna, David (copy).
2. Vienna, Three Philosophers.
3. Vienna, Gypsy Madonna.
4. Vienna, Portrait of a Youth (copy ?).
5. Venice, Fondaco dei Tedeschi. (The engravings can be used in giving suggestions of Giorgione's methods of composition.)
6. Venice, Chiesa di San Rocco, Christ carrying the Cross.
7. Venice, Giovanelli Palace, Soldier and Woman.
8. Venice, Correr Museum, Pietà (copy ?).
9. Castelfranco, Madonna Enthroned.
10. Dresden, Venus.
11. Kingston Lacy, Judgment of Solomon.
12. Buda Pesth, Birth of Paris (copy).
13. Florence, Uffizi, Judgment of Solomon.
14. Florence, Uffizi, Fire-test of Moses.
15. Florence, Uffizi, Knight of Malta.
16. Boston, Mrs. Gardner, Head of Christ.
17. London, National Gallery, Study for figure of San Liberale.
18. London, National Gallery, Epiphany.
19. London, National Gallery, David and Solomon.
20. London, Mr. Beaumont (Lord Allandale), Shepherd's Offering.
21. London, Mr. Benson, Holy Family.
22. St. Petersburg, Hermitage, Judith.

At first sight it may seem that there is more variety of style in these pictures than the works of any one artist would

<sup>1</sup> Justi's book contains a reproduction of the engraving. A copy of the engraving is owned by Mr. C. F. Murray of London.

show, especially one who died young. There are, however, certain general considerations to be clearly remembered. Giorgione was born and grew up in a time of great discovery, when long-established thoughts and habits were rapidly changing, so that we should commit a serious error were we to expect him to paint the same subjects, or in the same manner, as his predecessors. His works would necessarily be different from theirs. He would naturally show greater variety and, owing to his youth, his style would not have become fixed. What is certain is that his contemporaries regarded him with the greatest admiration, so the best way to fit ourselves to judge him is to study the life of Venice in his day.

It is not much that is left us of the great man's life work, but it suffices to show what he was, not only as a painter, but as a man; and why his influence was so great on his contemporaries, and why so long as the human heart stays young his spirit will continue to call loudly to it. That he was a perfect colourist, that is to say, that he understood how to juxtapose the rich oriental colours of the Venetian palette in such wise that each tint emphasised the effect of all the others, or that as a draughtsman he could adequately portray the images in his brain, does not explain the effect he has on those who care for him. These are merely technical qualities that are not difficult to acquire, and that many a man has possessed.

It is the spirit of Giorgione's work that makes him what he is. He spoke in the simplest, broadest way to the deeper side of our nature. Not so imbued with the ceremonies of religion as his master Bellini, nor so given over to the full-blooded joy in the beauties of this world as his comrade Titian,

he recognised that fanaticism or sensuality are equally spiritual death, and that the whole and perfect soul must be tempered in the fires of the heart, and cooled in the breezes of Nature. No such loveable Madonna had been painted as she of Castelfranco, — no purer presentation exists of the compelling beauty of the human figure than his Venus. Unabashed “he held both hands before the fire of life,” not warming first one and then the other, but with true poetic feeling combining every beauty that he perceived in one harmonious song.

Always steadily reaching for the same goal, this even-poised master did not one day paint such exalted figures as Bellini’s Virgin and Companion Saints in the Frari, and on another such heathen festivities as the same master’s Bacchanal. But, as he loved music and pleasant company and such pleasantnesses of life, so in his painting he shows us grace and harmony and good breeding. And as these things are hard to find in our daily course and harder still to fix long enough to paint their semblance, he fashioned for himself a world, an Arcadia, where men and women, surrounded by beautiful Nature, lived together, enjoying a life where there was both work and play. In all temperate reason they employ their energies now on problems of deep thought, and now in the satisfaction of health and natural bodily enjoyment, and it is just because of the reasonableness of this balance of mind and body that his pictures seem poetic, dreamlike and difficult to explain. As Keats, more than any scientist or idle dreamer, tells how the nightingale entrances the soul, so Giorgione depicts the Virgin and her Child guarded by attendant Saints, or adored by kings and slaves, with greater

persuasiveness than any theologian. But he does this neither as one diverted only by the pageantry, nor as an historian. Endowed with a poet's instinct, he saw the deeper meaning of the scene and depicted those parts that truly illustrate it.

Other artists there have been endowed with this same instinct, but their works do not obtain from us of to-day as full response as from our forefathers who lived when they were painted, and this because they do not give visual form to matters of lasting import, but to those fleeting affairs that constitute fashion. This is not so of Giorgione. The glory of his work will never fade, for his appeal is to the spirit of youth—that spirit which is compounded of a pure and natural love in all things beautiful, be they physical or spiritual, natural or divine, and with energy sufficient to urge it forward to the acquisition of, and the becoming part of, each and all of these various perfections. Such was Giorgione: neither utterly pagan, nor completely christian, but absolutely human in the finest sense, in that his perceptions were clear enough to see the special value of all things beautiful and his technical powers adequate to give due expression to that which he perceived.





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